SEPTEMBER 1963

Commentary

VOLUME THIRTY-SIX, NUMBER THREE

HANNAH ARENDT ON EICHMANN

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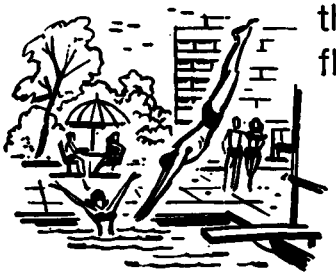

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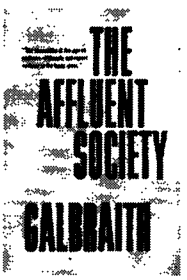

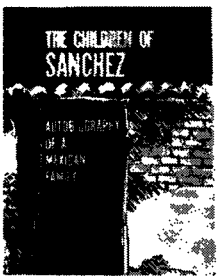

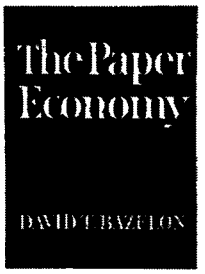

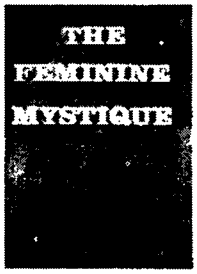

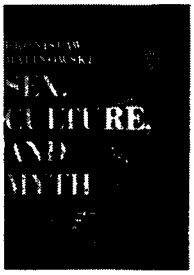

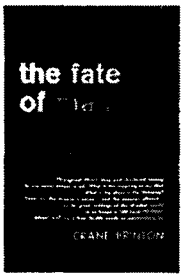

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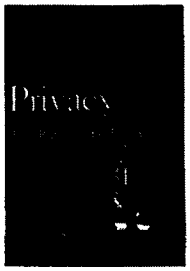

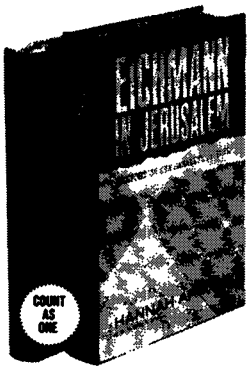

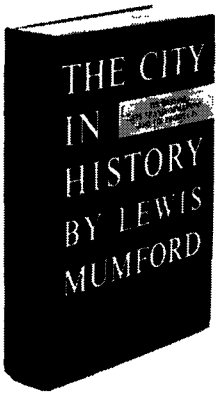

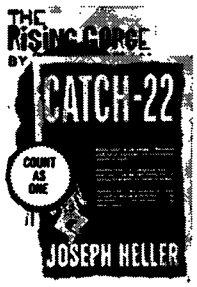

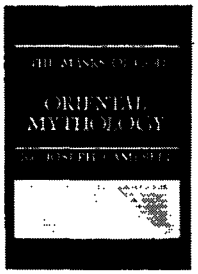

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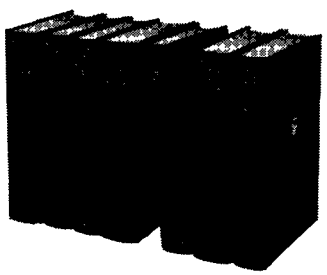

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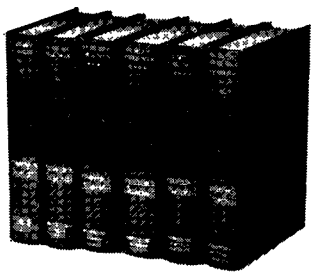

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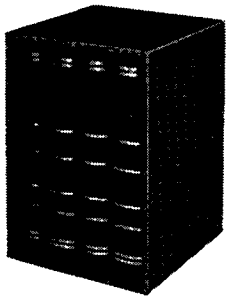

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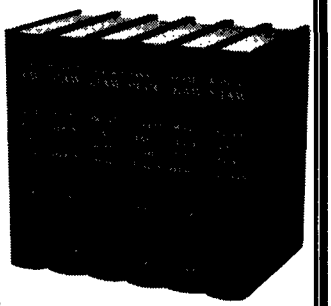

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Commentary

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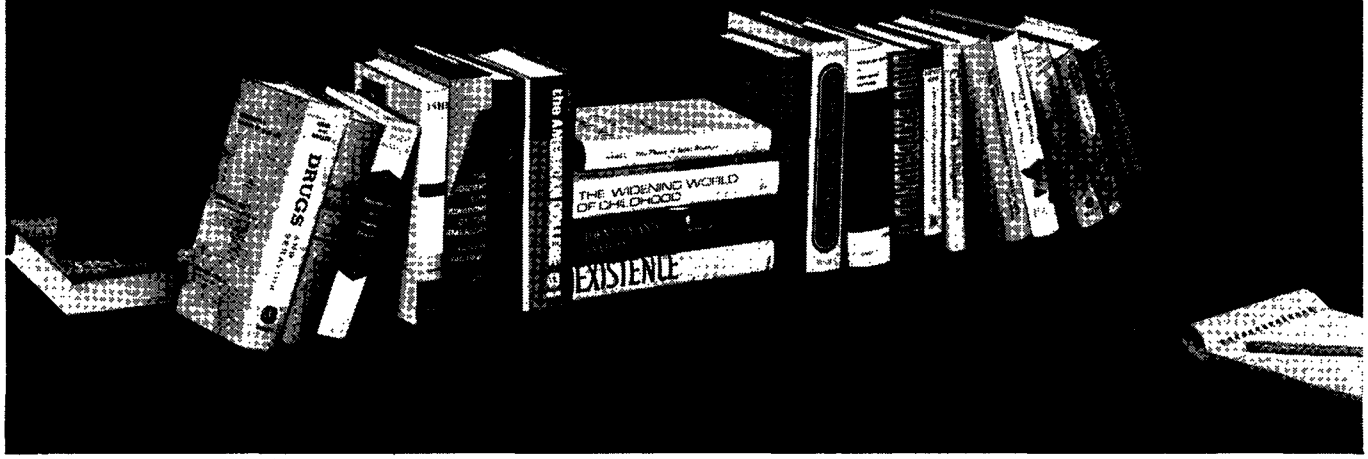

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Test-Ban Inspections

[*The following letter was written before the partial test-ban treaty was concluded, but as Mr. Maddox points out in his reply below, the history of the negotiations is still relevant, for it contains lessons for future negotiations in the field of arms control.* —ED]

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Having observed and been somewhat involved on the United States side in both the nuclear test ban negotiations and the disarmament conference in Geneva, I can't let several of John Maddox's points ["At the Brink of a Test Ban," June] go without comment.

For example, he says the East-West experts who, in 1958, laid the technical foundation for the test ban negotiations, included on-site inspection of unidentified underground events in their report "almost as an afterthought."

It is true their report recognized that the majority of earth tremors could be identified as such by a global network of internationally operated control posts, but it also noted that there would be a residue of unidentified underground events—presently estimated at thirty to forty annually—and it called for "timely inspection" of these events to make sure they were not sneak nuclear weapons tests. As can be seen from the following quotation from the report, the experts did not consider limiting the number of unidentified events eligible for inspection:

> When the control posts detect an event which cannot be identified by the international control organ and which could be suspected of being a nuclear explosion, the international control organ can send an inspection group to the site of the event in order to determine whether a nuclear explosion had taken place or not. The group would be provided with equipment and apparatus appropriate to its task in each case. . . .

This report was signed by Soviet as well as Western scientists, and Soviet political negotiators appeared to go along with its basic premises. In the ensuing three-power talks, seventeen articles of a test ban treaty expected to run to 25 articles, were hammered out. Then, following a progressive hardening of their line, the Soviets on September 1, 1961 unilaterally broke the three-year-old moratorium on nuclear weapons testing. On November 28, 1961 they formally repudiated the whole concept of international control and on-site inspection, points which Mr. Maddox apparently did not consider relevant to his analysis.

The Soviets returned to the principle of on-site inspection last December, offering a maximum of two or three inspections per year on their territory. The lowest figure mentioned by the United States has been seven. Mr. Maddox calls this difference "insignificant," and he makes a very serious charge. He says both the United States and the Soviet Union are guilty of engaging in "an intolerably devious attempt to obscure the issues at large with a bit of 'science.' " So "thin" is this "technical disagreement," according to Mr. Maddox, that "it has all the appearances of being a cloak for a general reluctance on the part of the governments of the United States and the Soviet Union to sign a test-ban treaty."

The mainstay of this charge is Mr. Maddox's assertion that the two nuclear sides "differ only in their notions of how frequently inspection teams should be allowed on each other's territory to look for evidence of nuclear explosions underground." This notion has been perpetrated by some oversimplified news reports. But a study of the Conference documents as well as reference to several news conferences by President Kennedy and Secretary of State Rusk show clearly that the more basic divergence is over how the inspections will be carried out, something the Soviets simply refuse to discuss until their quota of two or three inspections is accepted. What criteria will be used to determine if an event is eligible for inspection? What will be the size of the area inspected? Will inspectors have unimpeded access to it? What equipment will they be allowed to take with them? How much time will they have to conduct their inspection? How large will the inspection team be? How will it be formed? How and to whom will it report? No amount of prodding by the West—and by some of the non-aligned delegations to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee—has succeeded in drawing the Soviets out on this, the real crux, of the current deadlock. The Soviets say, "Accept our ceiling of two or three on-site inspections first and then we'll talk about the details." The U.S. and the U.K. say: "We want to be sure they are real inspections, effectively seeking evidence of sneak nuclear tests, and not conducted tours."

It is interesting to note that while the Soviets have returned to the principle of on-site inspection, they continue to deny that there is any scientific justification for it. They say their offer of two or three annual on-site inspections is purely political—an attempt to meet the Allies half way. However, they have steadfastly declined invitations to present their own data in support of this contention. They prefer to limit themselves to quotes from Western press clippings of Congressional hearings, often torn out of context.

Whether or not one accepts that the prospect of three annual on-site inspections poses a sufficient risk of discovery to deter a potential violator is, of course, basically a political judgment. But it cannot be made intelligently without reference to scientific data. The United States believes that available data, much of it developed at U.S. government expense, indicates that the reduced U.S. quota of seven inspections is much more realistic than three—this, in view of the present state of the art of detection, location, and identification of underground events, and in

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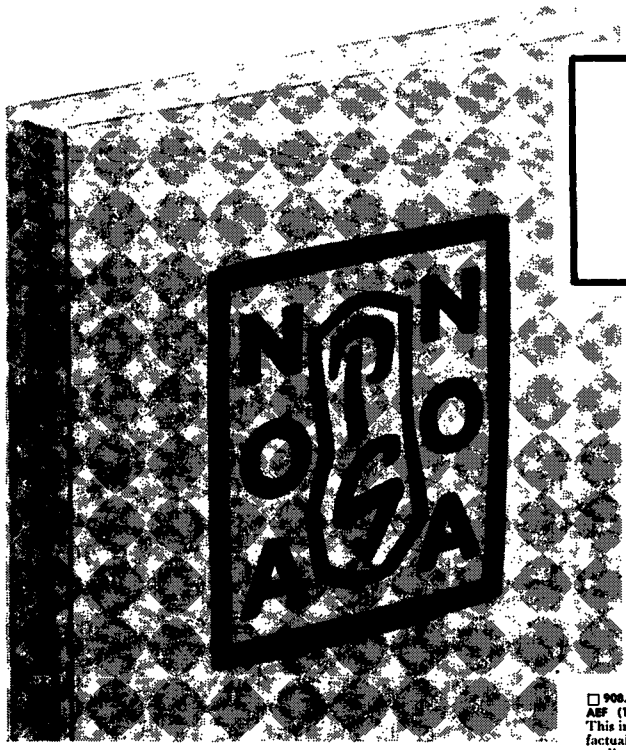

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view of the estimated average annual number of unidentified events on Soviet soil.

ROBERT DON LEVINE
Public Affairs Officer
U.S. Information Service
Geneva, Switzerland

MR. MADDOX *writes:*

To argue about these issues may seem irrelevant now that a partial test ban has been signed, but the history of the negotiations contains many lessons for the negotiation of the other measures of arms control that may now be within reach.

In reply to Mr. Levine: I described the 1958 scheme for on-site inspection as an "afterthought" because it appeared for the first time in the report of the Expert Committee as a necessary, but unexpected, complement to the use of remotely sited seismometers for detecting and identifying underground tests. The Committee did not appreciate the technical and political difficulties of carrying out a physical inspection of every site at which a suspicious seismic event occurred, and within six months Mr. Macmillan was in Moscow with the much more practicable proposal that there should be a quota of on-site inspections. The moral is that no committee, working theoretically, can be expected to define the technical procedures necessary to make a treaty secure.

It is true that the Soviet Union has often changed its position on important issues, but it is wrong to suppose that the West has been entirely consistent, though its record is much better. For example, at the end of 1955 the issue of how high an inspection quota should be, became embittered as the result of disagreement on the frequency of small earthquakes in the Soviet Union. Experience has shown the Russians to have been right in their contention that Western estimates were twice as high as they should have been (and this is part of the reason why the West has felt able to reduce the size of the quota for which it asked).

Mr. Levine has not changed my view that the difference between three inspections a year and seven is unimportant. Some on-site inspection must be provided for, but the number of inspections requested by either side is really a measure of what chance of discovery would be sufficient to deter the other side from cheating. To say that a certain chance will do, and that half that chance will not do, is to make a metaphysical assertion. In any case, this is not a technical matter at all, but a psychological one or, as Mr. Levine says, a political one. The same is true of questions like what areas are to be thrown open to on-site inspection; they are not technical absolutes, but some of the factors influencing the efficiency of a single on-site inspection. One of my complaints was that it has been customary to support chosen positions on issues like these with technical arguments; improvements in seismology might make it possible to change the quota of on-site inspections, but not improvements in the political climate. In this connection I think the United States was slow to recognize the importance of the Russian return to the principle of on-site inspection earlier this year.

I did not intend to question the honor of the U.S. government or the integrity of the men who have made test-ban policy for the last five years. Indeed, I argued that pressures outside the test ban proper have probably forced them into unduly rigid attitudes. My sense of exasperation, in May of this year, was founded on statements like the one made by John Foster describing the impasse at Geneva to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. On March 11 of this year he said: " . . . The Soviet Union is aware that our number is based on a set of provisions accompanying the number and unless all of the provisions are included, that we are unwilling to even talk about the numbers. But they have been unwilling to say anything until and unless you accept three on-site inspections and three unmanned stations." Both sides, it seems to me, were overrigid. Both of them could properly be asked to compromise, and that was the real purpose of my article.

Jews, Church & State

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg's response ["Church, State, and the Jews," April], to the challenge put to American citizens of Jewish origin and faith by the editors of *America* is one in which liberals of all persuasions can happily concur. That challenge . . . is addressed not only to the Jewish minority but to all minorities and non-conformists whose freedom is safe when and only when they can exercise the primary right of going into court for redress of wrongs. . . .

In asking the Jewish minority to restrain itself from appeal to lawfully constituted courts . . . the editors of *America* have presented a challenge which turns back upon themselves. They should in justice to themselves show cause why any minority should restrain itself from proper legal action to free itself from tyranny. . . . They should make clear the assumptions underlying their suggestion that Jews or any other minority forego legal recourse in exchange for the proverbial "mess of pottage."

The real issue here is not "prayer" at school or elsewhere. It is whether a majority can or will respect the rights of minorities as ensured in the law of the land. When the majority forgets to do that, we have courts to see to it that the majority remembers. It is a strange "bargain" indeed that would entail surrender of the right to appeal to court.

PHILIP BURTON
Minister
The Community Church
Watertown, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Arthur Hertzberg's article . . . is one of the better treatments of this complex subject to appear in any publication. One statement, however, contains a manifest exaggeration: "The Lord's Prayer . . . is a specifically Christian prayer and its recitation in the schools is clearly a sectarian practice, to which all Jews without exception are adamantly opposed." I know many Jews who are not in the least opposed to the recitation of this prayer in the public schools, and whose children wholeheartedly participate in it.

The Lord's Prayer, or any similar composition by a Jew or Christian is offensive to "ethical humanists" because it sets forth quaint and "unscientific" ideas like a "Father in Heaven" . . . etc. Little Gregory Levine and little Kevin Nathanson (whose parents are devout "ethical humanists") must be protected, so the argument runs, against any exposure to the God of the Psalms and the Prophets. Among people who are Jews by religion, however, it is only the narrowest and most

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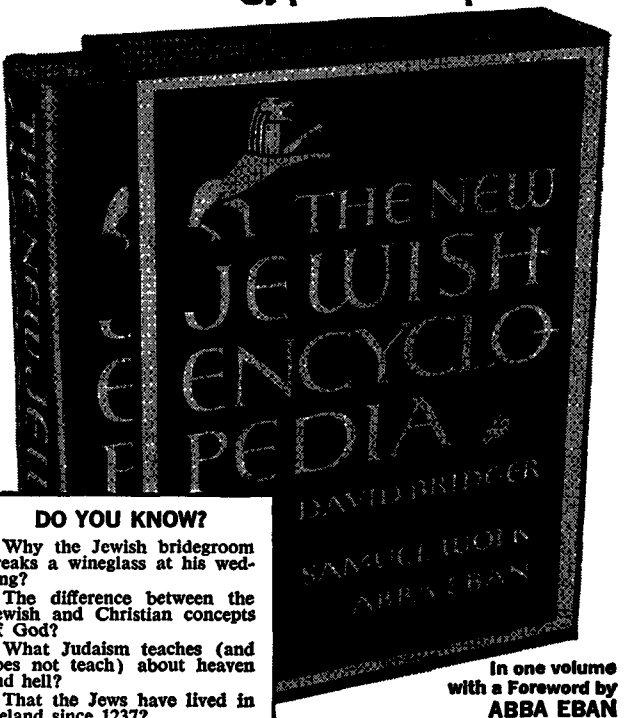

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bigoted who would balk at the recitation of a prayer which, though Christian in origin, expresses ideals and aspirations which are thoroughly Jewish. According to this latter reasoning, Christians ought to object to joining in any prayer that was written by a Jew or which plays an important role in Jewish worship.

Though one would never know it from reading the publicity releases of our national Jewish organizations, there are thousands, if not millions, of American Jews who feel that a place must be kept in American public life for non-sectarian devotions, in which people of all religious faiths can join. These . . . are convinced that an acknowledgment of God and His Law remains an essential part of both the Jewish religion and the American heritage. They do not have an irrational fear and loathing of Christianity, and are not convinced that the practice of Judaism can be confined, under the label of "social action," to espousing the latest fashionable left-wing causes.

(Rabbi) Roy A. Rosenberg
Honolulu Hawaii

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Arthur Hertzberg remarks that the word "religion" has resonances in Christian tradition that differ from those in Jewish culture. . . . Those searching for an understanding of Jewish culture must seek to define the term in a manner meaningful to Judaism. Implicit in the problem . . . is an examination of the specific content which religion has acquired. The word has come to connote an increasingly specific set of attributes with a consequent narrowing of philosophic scope.

Ostensibly, "religion" connotes faith and commitment to a creed or dogma. However, this tentative formulation must be tempered by the realization that the majority of us are conditioned by our secular education within a decidedly Christian context. A primary characteristic of Christian theology is the emphasis upon faith in Jesus. . . . In contrast to the Christian orientation toward faith in God and belief in the miraculous actualization of the ideal in the person of Jesus, Judaism stresses harmonizing one's actions with the precepts of the Torah . . . for Judaism holds that compliance with the Laws of God will engender in man the sense of the holy. Thus, religion for the Christian connotes primarily faith, whereas religion for the Jew connotes compliance with a comprehensive set of laws. . . .

An obvious consequence of our secular education within Christian culture has been to associate the word "religion" with faith and commitment to creed. This connotation, while accurate within the Christian context, severely distorts our understanding of Jewish religious culture. Because Judaism emphasizes adherence to the Law, it commands a way of life, and faith alone cannot suffice to make one a Jew. It has been said that "the Jewish faith is but one of the characteristic products of the Jewish community." . . . The issue now is whether the genus "religion" has become so identified with the species "Christianity" as to exclude Judaism from its embrace.

Once it is clear that Jewish religion connotes adherence to a distinct body of law, an entire range of problems may be examined in sharper perspective. The age-old conundrum of whether Judaism is a religion or nationality is now seen as a futile exploration of an artificial dilemma. It is not that the Hebrew nation adheres to a common faith; rather, Judaism defines a far-reaching culture and all who adhere to the religion participate in a unique culture of enormous scope. Thus . . . the symbols and rites of Judaism are focused almost entirely on historical episodes in the life of the entire cultural community, such as the exodus of the Jews from Egypt celebrated in the Passover ritual. . . .

Perhaps the real answer to the problem of definition is a more thorough grounding in Jewish education. A clearer understanding of how our common terms are influenced by our non-Jewish culture will alert us to the crucial point that the term "religion" has taken on a specific content, namely those characteristics predominant in Christian religion. . . . Thus alerted, we may be free of some unnecessary problems of identity faced by those Jews who, unable to affirm a strong faith in a supernatural being, hesitate in associating themselves with Judaism. [And] . . . we should be able to address ourselves more freely to the study of the *content* of Judaism.

Roger A. Gerber
Brooklyn, New York

Rabbi Hertzberg *writes:*

Is the Lord's Prayer really "Jewish" or non-sectarian? Is it properly recited every morning as part of a formal exercise, such as the opening of the school day (a practice which has now, of course, been struck down by the Supreme Court)? Rabbi Rosenberg answers "yes" to both of these questions. I am surprised, for the first proposition is bad Judaism and the second is bad Christianity.

In the sixth chapter of Matthew the Lord's Prayer is introduced as follows: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seest in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." (Matthew 6:5–8). Clearly the Lord's Prayer was created in opposition to the prayers of the synagogue, which is here slurred in preparation for this new utterance. This prayer was intended for private devotion, and most certainly not for state-prescribed formal exercises, which combine the worst features of the "synagogue" and the "heathen." The words of the Lord's Prayer did indeed originate in Judaism, but the plain sense of a liturgical text, especially one as famous as this, is only one of its meanings. There is also the use to which it was put at its origin and the overtones which have been added to it by history. In such contexts, and they are inescapable, the Lord's Prayer is as specifically Christian as the *Shema* is Jewish.

Is compulsory prayer nonetheless good for the community, the alternative being Communism? I believe that the reverse is true. Communism is a state religion, which compels obedience. It differs from other state religions in dogma, but not in the value of its compulsion. Such an approach to faith, whether it be in the name of the Jewish, Christian, or

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Marxist god, is not the alternative to atheism.

I am, of course, in agreement with Mr. Burton's comment that the only forum that a democracy provides in which the rights of individuals and groups can be ultimately determined is in the courts. Fortunately recourse to courts by any group to define its rights is being ever less regarded by others as an affront. I am equally in agreement with Mr. Gerber in his reflections on the nature of Judaism. Indeed, his view is central to the approach that I took in a reader entitled *Judaism* that I published two years ago, where I wrote that "Jewish faith is indefinable in Western theological categories, which are alien to its essence." A word of caution is, however, necessary. One can talk too easily of Judaism as a religion of Law and fail to see that such a definition involves several affirmations in the realm of faith. This doctrine of Law implies a God who gave it. We are thus involved, at the very least, in some speculation about God and His revelation.

Dewey vs. Science

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his reference to "Dewey's division of educational efforts as either 'logical' or 'psychological,'" Martin Mayer ["Scientists in the Classroom," April] implies that Dewey supported such a division. . . . There is no doubt that Dewey did separate the logical and psychological aspects of experience in *The Child and the Curriculum*. However, in the typical Hegelian style in which he was trained, he then proceeded to reunite the two. . . . Dewey shows the necessity of uniting the logical order of knowledge possessed by the scientist with the psychological process of the child in order to form a meaningful theory of education. This "progressive organization of subject matter" is a crucial element in his educational philosophy, and can be found specifically in *Experience and Education*. Dewey's synthesis of 1902 or 1938 anticipates the current efforts of Jerome Bruner and Mr. Mayer's scientists in the classroom. Mr. Mayer . . . presents Dewey unfairly to your readers.

Ronald Hyman
Teachers College
Columbia University
New York City

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MR. MAYER *writes:*

Mr. Hyman is right in his belief that the educators who cite Dewey against scientists do not understand Dewey very well. But I think he is himself reading into Dewey a great deal that is not there (always easy with someone who writes as poorly as Dewey did). Dewey was a prisoner of the inadequate biological science of the turn of the century, and believed that the individual recapitulated the growth of his species in the womb and the growth of his tribe in childhood. When Dewey spoke of "psychological," he believed he was expressing an iron law of child development which dictated what children were interested in at various ages. This attitude is directly contrary to that of Bruner and the scientists, whose position is that any subject worth teaching can be honestly taught in a manner interesting to children at any age, if you know what you are doing. Oddly enough, this question of how far Dewey anticipated Bruner and company came up last spring at a meeting at Mr. Hyman's own institution, and the Dewey experts on his faculty, after some discussion, agreed that there was indeed a great difference between Dewey's theory of what he had done at the Laboratory School in Chicago and Bruner's theory of what has been done by the reformers in math and physics instruction.

Cost of Disarmament

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "Disarmament and the Economy" [May], Ben B. Seligman includes the Peace Research Institute among those who have done no more than "look at the economics of disarmament before turning away, either in bemusement or horror," and quotes Ambassador James Wadsworth as saying that the Institute "just hasn't gotten around to it yet."

The fact is that the original studies done by Kenneth Boulding with Emile Benoit, Phillips Foster, Bert T. Hoselitz, W. S. Thompson, and Lawrence Witt on the economic aspects of disarmament were made in 1959 under the sponsorship of the Committee on Peace Research of which Kenneth Boulding was a member, and which, in 1961, developed into the Peace Research Institute.

Planning for disarmament has been a major concern of the Peace Research Institute from then until now. The main problem is to find the funds to do the studies we know must be done.

HAROLD TAYLOR
Vice-President
Peace Research Institute
Washington, D. C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I appreciated Mr. Seligman's favorable reference to the READ Program (Research on Economic Adjustments to Disarmament), which I have been directing, and to the recently published *Disarmament and the Economy* which sums up some of its results. Yet I am fearful that some of his comments may convey a mistaken impression to your readers about my views on three points over which considerable misunderstanding and controversy seem likely to arise.

First, on the pace of disarmament, I feel very strongly that a quick disarmament (in just a few years) is entirely unlikely and could be extremely dangerous—not, I should like to emphasize, for economic reasons, but because it would not provide the time to install the necessary supranational inspection and enforcement machinery, in the absence of which disarmament would, I feel, be a snare and delusion. Our READ disarmament model is laid out over a twelve-year period, which I believe constitutes an effective minimum. It is relevant, perhaps, that the European Economic Community, which attempted a far less difficult and vital objective, with a far smaller supranational superstructure, was planned to take 12 to 15 years.

Second, I feel that Defense Research & Development is still making and will continue to make, a tremendous contribution to the civilian economy. As it becomes more sophisticated and specialized, the civilian payoffs will become more indirect and long-range, but they will not necessarily be smaller. We are just beginning to visualize, for example, the revolutionary potentialities of laser technology. Less dramatic but enormous also in potential significance are the advances implied in vertical take-off and landing, and slotted-wing planes, which have been pioneered by Defense R & D.

Third, I would certainly not concur in Mr. Seligman's somewhat disdainful reference to the use of Keynesian instruments for controlling the level of unemployment in the economy. I consider that the use of fiscal policy for stability and growth has not yet been seriously attempted in the United States and that it is only by the uninhibited use of such instruments that the chief economic difficulties of disarmament could be surmounted. This is not to minimize, of course, the independent importance of the structural problems to which disarmament could also give rise, and to which much attention is also paid in our study.

EMILE BENOIT
New York City

MR. SELIGMAN *writes:*

I am delighted to know that PRI is really interested in the economics of disarmament. However, when I called them for information while gathering material for the article, the response I got from the top staff person—not Mr. Wadsworth—was the one quoted. Their man simply had nothing to tell me and I could only report it that way. Of course, I agree with Dr. Taylor that there ought to be more money around for such work.

I dislike quarreling with Professor Benoit, whose contributions to the economics of disarmament are of major importance. Perhaps I should have been more explicit in setting forth the details of his argument; I accept his letter as a clear statement of our differences. Nevertheless, I disagree—and on the third point, he has misunderstood my intent. Thorough discussion of the issues he raises would take more space than your columns would permit. Therefore, let me be brief.

A genuine willingness to disarm by the major powers could accomplish the task outlined by Professor Benoit in his book in a good deal less time than the dozen years he suggests. The longer we stretch the period for supranational construction, the more real would Schelling's "reciprocal fear" become. Political realities, it seems to me, should dictate speed. Two years, as the *Economist* maintains, may be insufficient, but fifteen years would mean not in our lifetime. The EEC is indeed an apt example: according to New York *Times* specialist Edwin Dale, it now appears to be coming apart at some crucial seams. Conversations I've had recently in Europe indicate that Dale's analysis is accurate.

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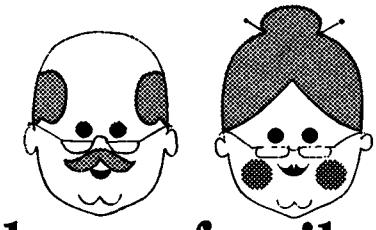
Of course, spillover from defense and space technology into the civilian economy would be desirable, but there is no authority that I know of who would say that it is of any great consequence. Thus far, we have had wonder metals, exotic fuels, and "miniaturization" which may supply us with electric wrist watches and cordless shavers. Medical practice has had some spillover benefits. Everything else is mere talk, as indeed the National Research Council of the Academy of Sciences recently conceded. Even worse is the plain fact that most of the scientists are still working on defense and space problems and most likely will continue to do so for years to come, thus depriving the civilian sector of precisely those skills needed to make spillover a reality. Europe spends twice as large a share of the gross national product on civilian research and development as we do: they have experienced real economic growth; we have not. If Professor Benoit means to say that we ought to have more spillover and that we ought to do something about it, I agree. But as to the "tremendous contribution" of defense and space research and development to the civilian economy—that's more wishful thinking than fact.

Professor Benoit and I really do not disagree on the importance of Keynesian techniques for stimulating the economic system. Too much has been learned since 1936, both here and abroad, to make any thoughtful person disdainful of their merits. But I do insist that in the United States measures to deal with specific structural changes occasioned by shifts in our industrial mix are also necessary and that these need to be carefully specified. Too many economists believe that the warm sun of rising effective demand will alone melt the frozen wastes of depressed areas. I know that Professor Benoit does not demur too strongly from these views: as he says, his own recent book discusses the urgency of particular plans for solving structural distortions in the economy.

Faith & Prejudice

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Martin E. Marty's discussion of my book, *Faith and Prejudice* [May] testifies to the fact that the reviewer has mastered the content of the book,



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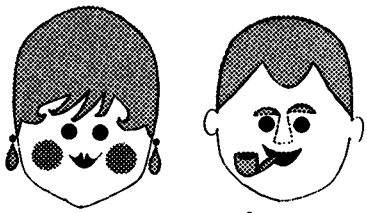

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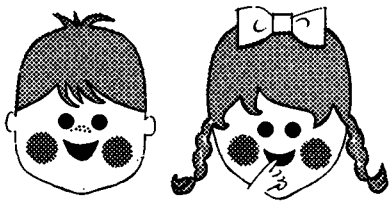

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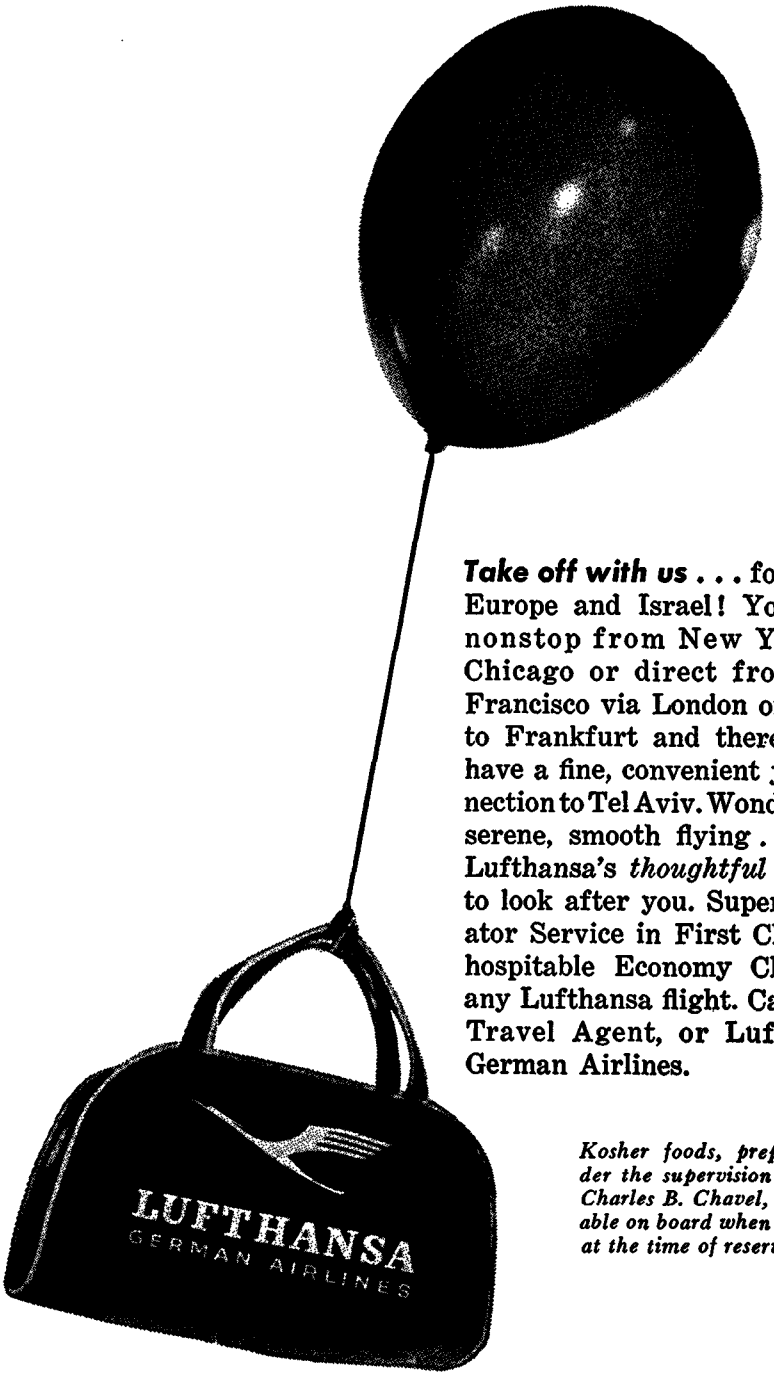

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has sifted it through his own thought, and has expressed its message in a way that is not merely a parroting of the author's words and phrases.

I wish nevertheless to take issue with Dr. Marty at several points of interpretation. . . . What I would like to call attention to is that his "cautions" (he also calls them "criticisms") are precisely the ones I make in the book. The criticism that the book deals with the teachings of "a changing . . . Protestantism" in a literature which is largely dated is stated where I point out that revision "is a characteristic feature of Protestant curricula, and the tendency of our research method to freeze its findings in a necessarily time-bound perspective is not meant to obscure the fact that the data alters from year to year." But Dr. Marty seems to imply that because the lessons of 1953–55 do not apply to 1963, that the book deals with issues that are not perennial. My prime intent in writing the book was to raise issues and offer insights that would be as relevant fifty years from now as they are at present. The book shows what happens to Christian teachings about other groups when we put our own churches, or even the Christian himself, in the central place that only God must occupy. The historical and theological perspective from which we discuss the Crucifixion or the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees, . . . for example, will always affect the ways we Christians discuss Jews, as will also our convictions as to the legitimate functions of Scripture. Dr. Marty deems unwise the labeling of theological perspectives of the different curricula. . . . This my book makes abundantly clear to the extent of describing in detail the crucial beliefs of each curriculum in respect to the issues raised. . . . In addition to denominational identifications . . . at the end of key quotations there are footnotes in many chapters pointing out that "fundamentalist" references are only Scripture Press citations, etc. I say explicitly that these "variations within Protestantism do not exhaust the possibilities" and that the neo-Reformation view of the Presbyterian curriculum is "being referred to by its popular name of Neo-Orthodoxy." I continue: "Labels are sometimes libels, and it must be remembered that each of

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these four theological versions is not fully representative of the strains of thought that bear the name. For example, there are many forms of liberalism, some of it pietistic and evangelical, which the liberal group in this study does not represent. Similarly, there are a number of types of conservatism and many variations of fundamentalism." It may be true that "much of Neo-Orthodoxy is far from Presbyterian," as Dr. Marty says, but it is also true that the general public and such journals as *Christianity Today* refer to the "Faith and Life Curriculum" of this denomination as Neo-Orthodox. . . . As for fundamentalism, Dr. Marty says that Scripture Press is the largest publisher of fundamentalist materials, and these are used by some churches of all denominations, by the independent fundamentalist churches, and by such sects as the River Brethren. Perhaps the designation "fundamentalism" is a pejorative one in Dr. Marty's thought; but it is certainly not in mine. If some former "fundamentalists" are now beginning to refer to themselves as "evangelicals," it is because they wish to dissociate themselves from the activities of the numerically smaller but more vocal group of divisive "fundamentalists" who are followers of Dr. McIntire. Dr. Marty asks whether the Missouri Synod is the best representative of "Conservatism." I refer to it as a "classical" type of conservatism which was largely articulated in its present form long before it was influenced by so-called fundamentalism. I further explain that, in American society, many groups like it are faced with the problem of creating "a community with deep commitments, self-discipline, and close mutual ties" in order "to witness to and transmit a heritage against the weight of cultural opinion" and that this attempt "of necessity can involve a marked degree of ingroup loyalty and outgroup rejection." . . .

BERNHARD E. OLSON
New York City

Correction

The date of Paul Goodman's *The Empire City* was incorrectly given in George Steiner's "On Paul Goodman" last month as 1942. The book was actually published (by Bobbs-Merrill) in 1959.

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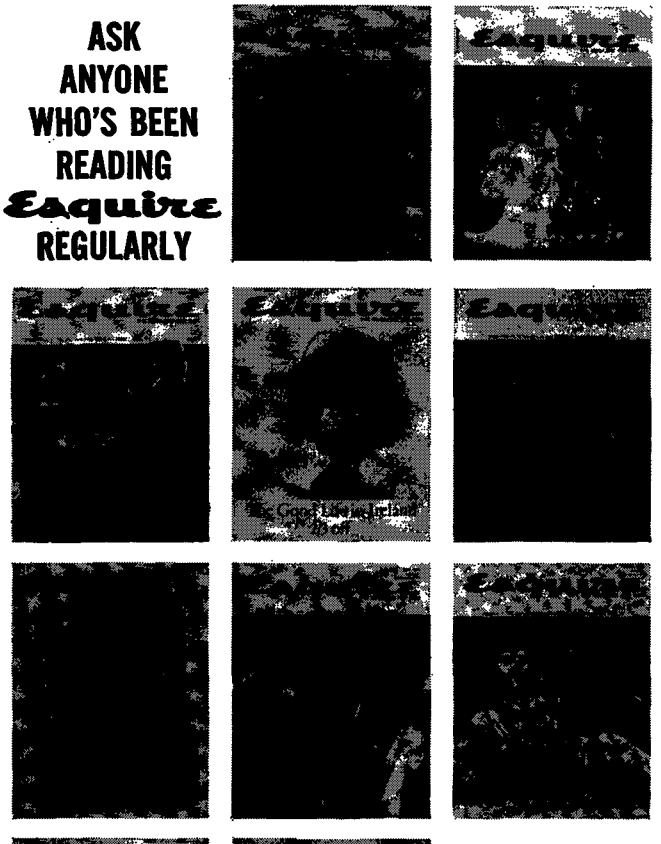

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HANNAH ARENDT ON EICHMANN

A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance

NORMAN PODHORETZ

ONE OF THE many ironies surrounding Hannah Arendt's book on the Eichmann trial* is involved in the fact that it should have been serialized in the *New Yorker* so short a time after the appearance in the same magazine of James Baldwin's essay on the Black Muslims. A Negro on the Negroes, a Jew on the Jews, each telling a tale of the horrors that have been visited upon his people and of how these horrors were borne; and each exhorting the prosperous, the secure, the ignorant to understand that these horrors are relevant to them. The two stories have much in common and they are both, in their essentials, as old as humankind itself—so old and so familiar that it takes a teller of extraordinary eloquence, or else of extraordinary cleverness, to make them come alive again. Baldwin is all eloquence; there is nothing clever in the way he tells the story of the Negro in America. On the one side are the powerless victims, on the other the powerful oppressors; the only sin of the victims is their powerlessness, the only guilt is the guilt of the oppressors. Now, this black-and-white account, with the traditional symbolisms reversed, is not the kind of picture that seems persuasive to the sophisticated modern sensibility—the sensibility that has been trained by Dostoevski and Freud, by Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, by Eliot and Yeats, to see moral ambiguity everywhere, to be bored by melodrama, to distrust the idea of innocence, to be skeptical of rhetorical appeals to Justice. And indeed, not even Baldwin's eloquence, which forced many of his readers to *listen* for once, could overcome the dissatisfaction many others felt at the moral simplicity of the story as he told it. For as he told it, the story did not answer to their sense of reality; it was an uninteresting story and a sentimental one.

Precisely the reverse is true of Hannah Arendt's telling of the story of how six million Jews were murdered by the Nazis. If Baldwin is all eloquence and no cleverness, Miss Arendt is all cleverness and no eloquence; and if Baldwin brings his story unexpectedly to life through the bold tactic of heightening and playing exquisitely on every bit of melodrama it contains, Miss Arendt with an equally surprising boldness rids her story of melodrama altogether and heavily underlines every trace of moral ambiguity she can wring out of it. What she has done, in other words, is translate this story for the first time into the kind of terms that can appeal to the sophisticated modern sensibility. Thus, in place of the monstrous Nazi, she gives us the "banal" Nazi; in place of the Jew as virtuous martyr, she gives us the Jew as accomplice in evil; and in place of the confrontation between guilt and innocence, she gives us the "collaboration" of criminal and victim. The story as she tells it is complex, unsentimental, riddled with paradox and ambiguity. It has all the appearance of "ruthless honesty," and all the marks of profundity—have we not been instructed that complexity, paradox, and ambiguity are the sign manifest of profundity?—and, in addition, it carries with it all the authority of Miss Arendt's classic work on *The Origins of Totalitarianism.* Anyone schooled in the modern in literature and philosophy would be bound to consider it a much better story than the usual melodramatic version —which, as it happens, was more or less the one relied upon by the prosecution at the Eichmann trial, and which Miss Arendt uses to great effect in highlighting the superior interest of her own

NORMAN PODHORETZ is the editor of COMMENTARY. The views he expresses here are his own and do not necessarily reflect either those of the magazine or of the sponsoring organization.

* *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil,* Viking, 275 pp., $5.50.

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version. But if this version of hers can from one point of view be considered more interesting, can it by the same token be considered truer, or more illuminating, or more revealing of the general situation of man in the 20th century? Is the gain she achieves in literary interest a matter of titillation, or is it a gain to the understanding?

Let us be clear about these questions: they cannot be answered by scholarship. To the extent that *Eichmann in Jerusalem* parades as history, its factual accuracy is of course open to critical examination. But it would be unwise to take the scholarly pretensions of the book at face value. This is in no sense a work of objective historical research aimed at determining "the way things really were." Except in her critique of the trial itself, which she attended, Miss Arendt's sources are for the most part secondary ones (she relies especially on Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews*), and her manipulation of evidence is at all times visibly tendentious. Nevertheless, a distorted or exaggerated picture drawn in the service of a suggestive thesis can occasionally bring us closer to the essential truth than a carefully qualified and meticulously documented study —provided that the thesis accords reasonably well with the evidence. The point to begin with, then, is Miss Arendt's thesis, and the problem to settle is whether it justifies the distortions of perspective it creates and the cavalier treatment of evidence it impels.

ACCORDING TO Miss Arendt, the Nazis, in order to carry out their genocidal plan against the Jews, needed Jewish cooperation and in fact received it "to a truly extraordinary degree." This cooperation took the form of "administrative and police work," and it was extended by "the highly assimilated Jewish communities of Central and Western Europe" no less abundantly than by "the Yiddish-speaking masses of the East." In Amsterdam as in Warsaw, in Berlin as in Budapest, Miss Arendt writes,

> Jewish officials could be trusted to compile the lists of persons and of their property, to secure money from the deportees to defray the expenses of their deportation and extermination, to keep track of vacated apartments, to supply police forces to help seize Jews and get them on trains, until, as a last gesture, they handed over the assets of the Jewish community in good order for final confiscation.

All this has long been known. What is new is Miss Arendt's assertion that if the Jews (or rather, their leaders) had not cooperated in this fashion, "there would have been chaos and plenty of misery but the total number of victims would hardly have been between four and a half and six million people."

So much for the Jews. As for the Nazis, carrying out the policy of genocide required neither that they be monsters nor pathological Jew-haters. On the contrary: since the murder of Jews was dictated by the law of the state, and since selfless loyalty to the law was regarded by the Germans under Hitler as the highest of virtues, it even called for a certain idealism to do what Eichmann and his cohorts did. Miss Arendt in this connection quotes the famous remark attributed to Himmler: "To have stuck it out and, apart from exceptions caused by human weakness, to have remained decent, that is what has made us hard." Eichmann, then, was telling the truth when he denied having been an anti-Semite: he did his duty to the best of his ability, and he would have performed with equal zeal even if he had loved the Jews. Thus also, the Israeli prosecutor Gideon Hausner was absurdly off the point in portraying Eichmann as a brute and a sadist and a fiend: Eichmann was in actual fact a banal personality, a nonentity whose evil deeds flowed not from anything in his own character, but rather from his position in the Nazi system.

This system is, of course, known as totalitarianism, and it is totalitarianism that brings the two halves of Miss Arendt's thesis together. Long ago, David Rousset, Bruno Bettelheim, and Miss Arendt herself taught us that securing the complicity of the victim is one of the distinguishing ambitions of totalitarian states, and her tale of Jewish complicity here is offered (at least on the surface) as yet another illustration of this point. Long ago, too, she and her colleagues taught us that totalitarian states aim at the destruction of common-sense reality and the creation of a new reality moulded to the lineaments of the official ideology, and her conception of Eichmann as an ordinary man whose conscience was made to function "the other way around" is similarly set forth in illustration of the more general point. Obviously, though, this ordinary man could not have been turned into so great and devoted a perpetrator of evil if the system had not been so tightly closed—if, that is to say, there had been voices to protest or gestures of resistance. Such voices as existed, however, were in Miss Arendt's judgment pathetically small and thin, and such gestures of resistance as were displayed she finds relatively insignificant. Not only did "good society everywhere" accept the Final Solution with "zeal

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and eagerness," but the Jews themselves acquiesced and even cooperated—as we have seen—"to a truly extraordinary degree." Here, then, is the finishing touch to Miss Arendt's reading of the Final Solution, and the explanation she gives for dwelling on Jewish complicity: this chapter of the story, she says, "offers the most striking insight into the totality of the moral collapse the Nazis caused in respectable European society—not only in Germany but in almost all countries, not only among the persecutors but also among the victims."

AN INTERESTING version of the story, no doubt about that. But let us look at it a little more closely. Assuming for the moment that Jewish leadership did in fact cooperate with the Nazis "to a truly extraordinary degree" (the degree is the point under contention), why did the Nazis *want* their cooperation? A reader of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* might have expected Miss Arendt to reply that they wanted it for its own sake. And indeed, she does quote David Rousset to this effect in dealing with the "cruel and silly question," as she calls it, that Hausner kept putting to his witnesses at the trial ("Fifteen thousand people were standing there and hundreds of guards facing you—why didn't you revolt and charge and attack?"). The passage from Rousset is crucial and worth quoting again:

> The triumph of the S.S. demands that the tortured victim allow himself to be led to the noose without protesting, that he renounce and abandon himself to the point of ceasing to affirm his identity. And it is not for nothing. It is not gratuitously, out of sheer sadism, that the S.S. men desire his defeat. They know that the system which succeeds in destroying its victim before he mounts the scaffold . . . is incomparably the best for keeping a whole people in slavery. In submission. Nothing is more terrible than these processions of human beings going like dummies to their deaths.

Yet when Miss Arendt arrives a hundred pages later at the matter of "Jewish help in administrative and police work," considerations of a strictly mundane and thoroughly utilitarian nature suddenly enter as the decisive ones. The Nazis wanted Jewish help, for without it, "there would have been either complete chaos or an impossibly severe drain on German manpower."

Coming from Miss Arendt, this is surprising—"to a truly extraordinary degree," we might say. It is surprising because one of the major points she makes in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* is that the Nazi will to murder every Jew in Europe was so powerful that resources badly needed at the front in 1944 and early 1945 were tied up so that the ovens of Auschwitz could be kept working at full capacity. Certainly it was more *convenient* for Eichmann that the Jews took some of the burdens upon themselves that would otherwise have fallen to him. But to contend that such burdens would have put enough strain on German resources to force the Nazis to ease off on the Jews is ridiculous by Miss Arendt's own account.

For by her own account, the Nazis were determined at almost any cost to "cleanse" Europe of the Jews; nothing in their program had higher priority. But was there no possibility of stopping them? Miss Arendt now argues that there was. Whenever they encountered determined opposition, she says, they backed down, and she cites France, Italy, Belgium, Bulgaria, and (most glorious of them all) Denmark, where the Nazis succeeded in deporting only a comparatively small proportion of the resident Jews. In Holland, Rumania, Hungary, Poland, and the Ukraine, on the other hand, the slaughter was near complete. Looking at all these countries, one can readily agree that the determining factor in the number of Jews murdered was the amount of resistance (either active or passive) offered to the Final Solution. The important question to be decided, however, is: resistance by *whom?* Miss Arendt knows, of course, that it was the attitude of the local populace that made the main difference—where they were willing to cooperate in the rounding up and deportation of Jews, most Jews were deported, and where they were unwilling to cooperate, fewer Jews were deported. But since Miss Arendt wishes us to believe that the Nazis could never have killed as many as six million Jews without Jewish help, she tries very hard to convey the impression that what the Jews themselves did in any given country mattered significantly too. And it is here that she becomes most visibly tendentious in her manipulation of the facts. In explaining, for example, why not a single Belgian Jew was ever deported (though thousands of stateless Jews living in Belgium were), she tells us how the Belgian police and the Belgian railwaymen quietly sabotaged deportation operations, and then adds: "Moreover, among those who had fled were all the more important Jewish leaders . . . so that there was no Jewish Council to register the Jews—one of the vital prerequisites for their seizure." But there *was* a Jewish Council in Belgium. There was also one in France, and Miss Arendt simply neglects to mention it. Quite right, too, for the *U.G.I.F.* made no more difference to the situa-

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tion in France than the *Association des Juifs en Belgique* made to the situation in Belgium, or than any other *Judenrat* made to the situation in any other country.

So far as the *Judenräte* were concerned, the chief difference between Western countries like Belgium and France on the one hand, and the Eastern territories on the other, was that the Germans did not set up ghettos in the West. The reason is suggested in Léon Poliakov's account of the role of the French *Judenrat*: "In France you never had a situation where Jews were systematically presiding over the deportation of other Jews. [For] *the attitude of the French population, which strenuously opposed the policy of segregation and isolation of the Jews, made such degradation impossible*" (my italics). In any case, the Nazis may indeed have backed down somewhat when they encountered opposition from the Danish king or the Italian army or the Bulgarian people, but even there only somewhat. (Hilberg: "The increasing recalcitrance of the French administration . . . finally resulted in a German decision to employ all the available forces of the Security Police for an all-out drive against the remaining Jews.") As for Jewish opposition, all *it* ever did was bring out more German troops. Certainly the Nazis showed little concern over the drain on their manpower when the Warsaw Ghetto revolted.

But not only is Miss Arendt wholly unwarranted in emphasizing Jewish cooperation as a significant factor in the number of victims claimed by the Final Solution; the irony is that her insistence on doing so also involves her in making the same assumption about the Nazis that lay behind Jewish cooperation itself. This assumption was that the Nazis were rational beings and that their aims must therefore be limited and subject to negotiation. When one of the most notorious of the Jewish leaders—Jacob Gens of Vilna—declared that "with a hundred victims I save a thousand people, with a thousand ten thousand," he was saying precisely what the heads of all the major European governments had said earlier about Hitler. "Herr Hitler," as the London *Times* always referred to him in the 30's, was after all a statesman; he had grievances, some of them legitimate; if a few of these grievances were satisfied, his anger would be "appeased," and war could be averted. As many historians have pointed out, the policy of appeasement was not in itself foolish or evil; it was a perfectly traditional diplomatic tactic, and its foolishness in this case lay in the fact that it was being applied to an aggressor who was *not* politically prudential and whose aims were *not* of the traditionally limited kind. The mistake of the appeasers, in other words, stemmed from their failure to recognize the unprecedented and revolutionary character of the Nazi regime.* Almost every Jewish leader in Europe made the same mistake regarding the intentions of the Nazis toward them and their people—a mistake that the Nazis incidentally did everything they could to encourage.

If, then, we ask why Jewish leadership cooperated with the Nazis, the answer would seem to be that they were following a policy of appeasement, and that there was nothing in the least "extraordinary" about this. That, however, is not the answer we get from Miss Arendt; her answer is more interesting and complicated and paradoxical. A distinction must be made, she argues, between the Jewish masses and the Jewish leaders. It was "cruel and silly" of Hausner to ask why the masses went passively to their deaths, "for no non-Jewish group or people had behaved differently." But it is apparently compassionate and intelligent to ask much the same question of the Jewish leaders, even though no non-Jewish leaders had behaved differently. In any event, having raised the issue, Miss Arendt finds herself afflicted for the only time in the book with an attack of speculative diffidence and tells us nothing—literally nothing—about why so many Jewish leaders should have cooperated in the destruction of their own people and (since hardly any of them managed to survive) in their own ruin as well. "Wherever Jews lived, there were recognized Jewish leaders, and this leadership, almost without exception, cooperated in one way or another, for one reason or another, with the Nazis." *In one way or another, for one reason or another.* Period. ". . . we can still sense how they enjoyed their new power. . . . We know how the Jewish officials felt when they became instruments of murder. . . . We know the physiognomies of the Jewish leaders during the Nazi period very well." Do we, now? Then pray, Miss Arendt, what did they look like? Give her exactly thirteen lines—four and a bit each for the incredible Chaim Rumkowski of Lodz, the many-sided Leo Baeck

* Even Anthony Eden was guilty of this failure, for his opposition to appeasement was based on the idea that Hitler could only be stopped by an intensive rearmament program on the part of the democracies. Deterrence, however, would almost certainly not have worked to prevent World War II, for Hitler *wanted* war, which he saw as a consummation. If the democracies had rearmed earlier, the war would have been won more easily, perhaps, but that is another matter.

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of Berlin, and the tortured Adam Czerniakow of Warsaw—and her picture is complete. And why not? The Jews in Miss Arendt's interesting and complicated and paradoxical and ruthlessly honest version of the story are a people curiously without psychology (except of the darker sort, leading to self-destruction), and a people curiously without a history (except of the disabling sort, leading to hopeless inadequacy). When they act—whether it be going to their death, or running a country, or prosecuting a trial—a mere glance at them is enough to produce a confident judgment. And again, why not, when the judgment will almost invariably be adverse?

For what is Miss Arendt really saying when she tells us that "if the Jewish people had . . . been unorganized and leaderless, there would have been chaos and plenty of misery but the total number of victims would hardly have been between four and a half and six million people." Why, she is saying that if the Jews had not been Jews, the Nazis would not have been able to kill so many of them—which is a difficult proposition to dispute. I do not think I am being unfair to Miss Arendt here. Consider: the Jews of Europe, even where they were "highly assimilated," were an organized people, and in most cases a centrally organized people. This was a fact of their condition no less surely than sovereign nationhood was a fact of the French condition. Yet I doubt that Miss Arendt would ever take it into her head to declare that if the French people had not been organized into a nation-state, they could never have been sold out to the Nazis by Pétain and Laval. Throughout this book, Miss Arendt is very nasty about Zionists and Zionism, but the only sense one can glean from her argument is a grain of retroactive Zionist sense. The Jews, she is implying, should have known that anti-Semitism rendered their position in the Diaspora untenable, and they should therefore either have set up a state of their own or renounced their communal existence altogether. She does not explain how such renunciation could have saved them from the Nuremberg laws. Nor does she tell us why the slaughter of Jews in occupied Russia should have been so complete even though there was no central Jewish leadership or communal organization in the Soviet Union.

But it is unnecessary to pursue the absurdities of Miss Arendt's argument on this issue, just as it is unnecessary to enter once again into the endless moral debate over the behavior of the Jewish leaders—the endless round of apology and recrimination. They did what they did, they were what they were, and each was a different man. None of it mattered in the slightest to the final result. Murderers with the power to murder descended upon a defenseless people and murdered a large part of it. What else is there to say?

IN STARK contrast to the Jews, whose behavior in Miss Arendt's version of the story self-evidently explains and condemns itself, the Nazis —or anyway Adolf Eichmann—need the most careful and the most imaginative attention before they can be intelligently judged. The irony here is of course obvious, and even the Eichmann trial to some extent fell victim to it. As Harold Rosenberg put it in these pages two years ago:

> Why should this self-styled nobody who had hurled into silence so many of the subtlest and most humane intellects of Europe have been permitted to elaborate on each trait of his character, his opinions on all sorts of matters, including Kant's categorical imperative, and his conception of himself as Pontius Pilate and as a "romantic," his reaction to his wife's reading the Bible, his drinking of mare's milk and *schnapps?* One question would have sufficed to complete the formulation of his culpability: "Weren't you the head of Sec. IV B4 of RSHA charged with the extermination of the Jews of Europe, and did you not carry out the function assigned to you to the best of your ability?"

This, in Rosenberg's view, was the main defect of the trial, and it flowed from Gideon Hausner's persistent efforts to prove that Eichmann was subjectively vicious, as well as a perpetrator of objectively criminal deeds. Miss Arendt also disapproves of these efforts by Hausner, but her complaint is against Hausner's particular conception of Eichmann's character and not against the opportunity he gave him to speak. Far from being offended at the idea that *this self-styled nobody who had hurled into silence so many of the subtlest and most humane intellects of Europe* should have been permitted to discourse himself at such great length, Miss Arendt helps the discourse along, develops it, refines it, and in the end virtually justifies it. By this I do not mean that she defends Eichmann, as some of her critics have stupidly charged: she does nothing of the kind anywhere in her book, and she says plainly in the closing chapter that he was guilty of participation in mass murder and deserved to hang. What she does do, however, is accept Eichmann's account of himself and of his role in the Final Solution as largely true. In some sense, he *was* an "idealist"; in some sense, he was *not* an anti-Semite; and the degree of his responsibility for the murder of the six million,

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while sufficient to hang him, *was* relatively insignificant, and certainly nowhere near what the prosecution claimed. By building Eichmann up into a fiendish Jew-hater and a major Nazi figure, Miss Arendt believes, the prosecution missed the whole point of his crimes, of the system which made them possible, and of the lessons to be drawn for the future.

Taking Eichmann pretty much at his own word, then (except when his own word conflicts with her reading of his character), Miss Arendt treats us to a genuinely brilliant portrait of the mind of a middle-echelon Nazi and, by extension, of the world that produced him and gave him the power to do the things he did. And around this theme of Eichmann's "banality" other themes gather: the almost universal complicity of Christian Europe, and especially of the German people, in Nazism (for in diminishing Eichmann's personal responsibility for the Final Solution, she enlarges the area of European responsibility in general); and the almost total consequent unwillingness of the Federal Republic to prosecute and mete out adequate punishment to Nazi war criminals still at large and in many cases flourishing (Miss Arendt, it should be noted, presents perhaps the most severe indictment of Adenauer's Germany that has yet been seen this side of the Iron Curtain, and whatever comfort the book may bring to the Germans in some respects, it is bound in the main to infuriate them).

The brilliance of Miss Arendt's treatment of Eichmann could hardly be disputed by any disinterested reader. But at the same time, there could hardly be a more telling example than this section of her book of the intellectual perversity that can result from the pursuit of brilliance by a mind infatuated with its own agility and bent on generating dazzle. The man around the corner who makes ugly cracks about the Jews is an anti-Semite, but not Adolf Eichmann who sent several million Jews to their death: *that* would be uninteresting and would tell us nothing about the Nature of Totalitarianism. Similarly, the behavior of the Jewish leaders under the Nazis was "extraordinary," but Adolf Eichmann was ordinary, even unto banality; otherwise, he tells us nothing about the Nature of Totalitarianism. Did he have no conscience? Of course he had a conscience, the conscience of an inverted Kantian idealist; otherwise he tells us nothing about the Nature of Totalitarianism. But what about his famous statement that he would die happy because he had sent five million "enemies of the Reich" to their graves? "Sheer rodomontade," sheer braggery—to believe it is to learn nothing about the Nature of Totalitarianism. And his decision to carry on with the deportations from Hungary in direct defiance of Himmler's order that they be stopped? A perfect example of the very idealism that teaches us so much about the Nature of Totalitarianism.

No. It finally refuses to wash; it finally violates everything we know about the Nature of Man, and therefore the Nature of Totalitarianism must go hang. For uninteresting though it may be to say so, no person could have joined the Nazi party, let alone the S.S., who was not at the very least a *vicious* anti-Semite; to believe otherwise is to learn nothing about the nature of anti-Semitism. Uninteresting though it may be to say so, no person of conscience could have participated knowingly in mass murder: to believe otherwise is to learn nothing about the nature of conscience. And uninteresting though it may be to say so, no banality of a man could have done so hugely evil a job so well; to believe otherwise is to learn nothing about the nature of evil. Was Hausner right, then, in repeatedly calling Eichmann a liar? Yes, he was right, however successfully Eichmann may have deceived himself by then, and however "sincere" he may have thought his testimony was.

AND THE Nature of Totalitarianism? What Miss Arendt's book on the Eichmann trial teaches us about the Nature of Totalitarianism is that the time has come to re-examine the whole concept. Apart from the many other weaknesses it has revealed since the days when it was first developed to distinguish between the "simple" dictatorships of the pre-modern era and the ideologically inspired revolutionary regimes of Stalin and Hitler, the theory of totalitarianism has always been limited in its usefulness by the quasi-metaphysical and rather Germanic terms in which it was originally conceived. For what the theory aimed at describing was a fixed essence, not a phenomenon in flux, and the only changes it saw as possible within the totalitarian structure were those leading toward a more perfect realization of the totalitarian idea itself. (One consequence of this —and it speaks worlds about the limitations of the theory in general—was that many students of Soviet society refused for a long time to credit the significance of the liberalizing tendencies that were so obviously becoming manifest under Khrushchev: once a totalitarian state always a totalitarian state, unless, of course, it could be overthrown by force.)

But since the perfect totalitarian state did not

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yet exist, how did the theorists of totalitarianism know what it would look like in a fully realized condition? The answer is that they knew from the Nazi concentration camps, which, as they rightly understood, had in part been set up to serve as models and as "laboratories" for experimenting with techniques of absolute domination. Here was where totalitarianism stood nakedly revealed; here was its essential meaning; here was what the system was really all about.

So far, so good. The trouble began with a tendency to speak of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia as though they had already attained to the perfection of vast concentration camps, and as though the Nazis in their style and the Communists in theirs had already been transformed into the new men of the transvalued totalitarian future. Yet on the basis of a somewhat more optimistic view of human nature than is implicit in the theory of totalitarianism (which substitutes for the naïve liberal idea of the infinite perfectibility of man the equally naïve idea of the infinite malleability of man), one may be permitted to doubt that the whole world could under any circumstances ever be made over into a concentration camp. As it is, Soviet Russia seems to be moving in the other direction. And so far as the Third Reich is concerned, it lasted for less than thirteen years and conquered only a small section of the globe, with the result that: (1) Nazi Germany never had a chance to seal itself off completely from outside influences; and (2) the people who participated actively in Nazism *knew* they were being criminal by the standards under which they themselves had been raised and that also still reigned supreme in the "decadent" culture of the West.

This is why it is finally impossible to accept Miss Arendt's conception of Eichmann's role and character. Eichmann was not living in the ideal Nazi future, but in the imperfect Nazi present, and while we can agree with Miss Arendt that, as a mere lieutenant-colonel, he probably did not enjoy the importance that the Israeli indictment attributed to him, neither can he have been quite so banal as she makes him out to be. After all, there *was* enough opposition to the Final Solution to have persuaded him that not everyone looked upon the murdering of Jews as a fine and noble occupation, and after all, he *was* a first-generation Nazi and an important enough one to have been trusted with a large measure of administrative responsibility for a top-priority item in the Nazi program. Now, if we are not to lose our own minds in the act of trying to penetrate into the psychology of the Nazi mind, we must be very careful to keep it clear that this item of the Nazi program—the "cleansing" of Europe, and ultimately the whole world, of Jews—was literally insane. It is one thing to hate Jews, but it is quite another to contemplate the wholesale slaughter of Jews; it is one thing to believe that no nation-state can be healthy when it contains "alien" elements, but it is quite another to decide upon the murder of eleven million people (the estimated target of the Final Solution) as a means of achieving ethnic homogeneity. Ponder the difference between the Germans and the Rumanians in this connection. The Rumanians were the worst anti-Semites in Europe and were delighted to join in the butchering of Jews, until they discovered that there was money to be made from the saving of Jews, whereupon they began saving Jews: this is pathological anti-Semitism bounded by rational limits. The Germans, on the other hand, regarded the Jews, whom they had rendered utterly helpless with a stroke of the pen, as dangerous enemies, and they were so convinced of the necessity to do away with these enemies that they were willing to let the war effort suffer rather than let up: this is pathological anti-Semitism bounded by no rational limits. Insanity, in short.

It is in this insanity, I believe, and not in the pedestrian character of Adolf Eichmann, that whatever banality attaches to the evil of the Final Solution must be sought. And because Hitler and his cohorts were madmen on the Jewish question, there is probably little of general relevance we can learn from the Final Solution beyond what the Nuremberg trials established concerning the individual's criminal accountability when acting upon superior orders, even within a system guided by insane aims. There is, however, much to be learned from the Final Solution about other matters, and principally about anti-Semitism. When Miss Arendt speaks of the amazing extent of the moral collapse that the Nazis caused "everywhere," she must be referring specifically to the Jewish question. The will to fight the German armies did not collapse everywhere, and the will to defend democracy against the Nazi onslaught stood up well enough to triumph in the end; the only collapse that took place "everywhere" was a collapse of the will to prevent the Nazis from wiping the Jews off the face of the earth. Here again, Miss Arendt can be refuted out of her own mouth, for acquiescence in the Final Solution (as she demonstrates) was far from universal in Europe (though it may well have been nearly uni-

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versal in Germany). The fact remains, however, that there was acquiescence enough to allow this insane Nazi ambition to come very close to succeeding. Nobody cared about the Gypsies because nobody ever thinks about the Gypsies—except the police. But how did it happen that nobody cared about the Jews when everyone seems always to be thinking about the Jews? The question surely answers itself, and the answer incidentally provides the justification for Ben Gurion's statement that one of the purposes of the Eichmann trial was to make the nations of the world ashamed.

Miss Arendt dislikes that statement, but no more than she dislikes every other statement Ben Gurion made about the trial. She is also unhappy with the trial itself—the fact that Eichmann was tried before an Israeli court instead of an international tribunal, the substance of the indictment, the way Hausner handled the prosecution, the way Servatius conducted the defense. The only aspect of the trial that pleases her is that the judges behaved with scrupulous regard for the interests of Justice: she is as unstinting in her praise of them as she is relentless in her contempt for Hausner and Ben Gurion ("the invisible stage manager of the proceedings"). A few of Miss Arendt's criticisms of the trial seem reasonable, but given the animus she exhibits from the very first sentence of the book, it becomes extremely difficult to look upon these criticisms as anything other than further instances of the inordinate demands she is always making on the Jews to be better than other people, to be braver, wiser, nobler, more dignified—or be damned. (When, to take a trivial example, has it ever popped into anyone's head to accuse a prosecutor in an adversary proceeding of being unfair to the defendant he is working to convict? But Mr. Hausner was the attorney-general of a Jewish state, and therefore it is proper to attack him for doing what all prosecutors are expected to do.)

This habit of judging the Jews by one standard and everyone else by another is a habit Miss Arendt shares with many of her fellow-Jews, emphatically including those who think that the main defect of her version of the story is her failure to dwell on all the heroism and all the virtue that the six million displayed among them. But the truth is—*must* be—that the Jews under Hitler acted as men will act when they are set upon by murderers, no better and no worse: the Final Solution reveals nothing about the victims except that they were mortal beings and hopelessly vulnerable in their powerlessness. And as with the victims, so with those who were lucky enough to survive the holocaust. There is no special virtue in sheer survival, whatever Bruno Bettelheim may say, and there is no martyrdom in sheer victimization, whatever certain sentimentalists among us may think.

The Nazis destroyed a third of the Jewish people. In the name of all that is humane, will the remnant never let up on itself?

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DAN WAKEFIELD

IN HAZARD

I WOULD just as soon forget about Hazard, Kentucky, a desire I share with a number of its unemployed residents, the large U.S. coal companies, the United Mine Workers of America, and the Federal Government. I went there in late March for a large national magazine on an assignment that did not, for innumerable and irrelevant reasons, work out. I was there for four days—rather longer than most visiting journalists, sociology students, or candidates for elective office usually stay before issuing authoritative reports on the place (twenty-four hours is par for this course)—and I have not been so happy to leave a strange town since the time I departed from Montgomery, Alabama after being set upon by Confederate patriots following a White Citizens' Council meeting.

The effect of automation on the coal industry is not the only burden that has come to rest on the weary, stripped hills of Hazard and the surrounding countryside, but it is the latest and most basic of the problems that have earned the whole Appalachian region the title of "the nation's number one depressed area." Appalachia—which Thomas B. Morgan described as our own "underdeveloped country" in an excellent brief account of the place in *Look* last winter—is an 80,000-square mile mountain region stretching south and west from Virginia through Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, and into the upper tips of Georgia and Alabama. Long geographically landlocked by the mountains and poor roads, and largely known to the outside world as the home of colorful mountaineers or hillbillies, Appalachia is more its own place than a part of the states through which it extends. Hazard and surrounding Perry County (both of which are named after Oliver Hazard Perry, and not, as some imaginative journalists have written, after the "hazards" of coal-mining) present neither its worst nor best face, but are representative of the region.

Hazard became the center of attention in Appalachia's troubles because of a wildcat strike of coal-miners that erupted throughout the Appalachian fields at the end of summer in 1962. In most places the strike—which was discouraged by the United Mine Workers, the union to which the majority of the men belonged—petered out, but in four or five counties of eastern Kentucky, the strikers managed to keep going, sent out "roving pickets" in automobiles to shut down mines, and called weekly meetings in Hazard that are still being held. What has since become known as "the Hazard strike" drew special attention because of its accompanying violence, which of course was perpetrated by those now nationally famous "extremists on both sides" who are having such a field day in our moderate land. Both striking miners and coal operators—as well as people known to be supporting one side or the other—have been victims of arson, beatings, and shootings, and have had their homes, cars, and equipment dynamited. By December of last year there had been fifty such acts of violence, after which officials stopped counting.

Unemployment is ordinarily a dull subject, but violence titillates everyone, and I imagine it was this aspect of the Hazard situation that drew so many of us reporters—like vultures circling in on the wounded town—to what had previously been an unknown place. By the time I arrived, Hazard had been visited by representatives of such assorted media as the New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, CBS, *Life*, Tass, *Newsweek*, FM station WBAI of New York, a West German documentary film crew (later rumored to be really *East* German), and something called *Progressive Labor*, which published a special issue largely devoted to the "class struggle" in Hazard. There had also been several people posing as representatives of these and other media, including a man claiming to be from *Newsweek* who preceded a man who really *was* from *Newsweek*, and a girl who preceded me claiming to be from the magazine I had been sent by. When I reached Hazard, confusion was at a maximum and hospitality at a minimum. (The mountain region is not noted for its hospitality in the best of times, and is regarded

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as something of a foreign province even by other Kentuckians. In Louisville the night before, I was told by a reporter about a friend of his who had got lost driving in the mountains. When he asked a native what road went to the next town, he was asked in turn, "What business is it of yours?")

THE FIRST thing I did after registering at Hazard's Grand Hotel on Main Street ("a phone in every room"), was to call Fred Luigart, a reporter and Hazard resident who is Eastern Kentucky Bureau Chief for the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. The first thing *he* did, with apologies, was call the New York office of the magazine that had sent me to make sure I really was the person I said I was. Luigart is a young man in his mid-thirties who came to this region after college and the Army precisely because most other people were leaving it. The lure was not a hermit's life, but the challenge of an old frontier that needed youth and energy. Determined to stick with it, he has refused assignments elsewhere and has covered the touchy and tangled story of the current troubles with a meticulous fairness to all concerned. The last time I talked with him was via long distance to check some facts, and he was then concerned with the latest plague to affect this Job among towns—a flood that had made tens of thousands homeless through eastern Kentucky and had filled his own basement with five feet of water. I expressed my far-off New Yorkish concern and he said, "Don't worry about *us*," with such vehemence that I went back, properly, to worrying about my own story.

After satisfying himself that I "checked out," Luigart performed the essential service of taking me around to the leading local officials and participants in the battle and personally vouching for my credentials. Hurrying along behind his brisk pace as we went from stores to offices to homes through a rainfall that made the drab town even grayer and muddier, I felt rather like a U.N. mediator must feel when he comes to some remote troubled land whose warring factions have long since grown disillusioned with the aid of outsiders.

Late in the afternoon we tracked down Berman Gibson, the principal leader of the strike, and though he was glad to see me—for the strikers, unlike the owners, want all the outside publicity they can get—he, too, was suspicious because I had met the town business, police, and civic leaders, the hostile "other side" in the battle. "Oh yes," he burst out later in redfaced indignation, "you see them folks on Main Street, they'll wine ye and dine ye and show ye a *good* time." He hadn't of course considered the fact that just as he knew I had been talking with them, they knew I was talking with him and his troops, and were not about to wine and dine me—in some cases weren't even about to talk to me. (At one point during my stay, a businessman noted some mud on my shoes as a sign of my having consorted with the strikers.) Going back and forth from the town to the union hall where the strikers had their headquarters, or from union hall to offices or homes of business people, was nearly as tense a business as going back and forth between Negro and white communities in Alabama or Mississippi during a racial crisis. (You give the address, the cab driver makes that slow turn of the neck to look you over, perhaps spits his comment out the window, and grinds his gears in a way that suggests he would like to be grinding *you*.)

That evening was the weekly meeting of the strikers at the union hall (the local, made up of retired UMW men, was still allowing the strikers to use their hall, but later, in April, town officials discovered a "fire hazard" and the strikers had to be turned out). The union hall was a building as barren as the brown hills seen through its windows, and decorated mainly with a large glowering portrait of John L. Lewis. The strike was in its sixth month by then and everyone was tired, including Gibson, who pounded the table as he had so many times before and shouted against the injustice of "the coal operators, keeping the poor people down—them with two Cadillacs in their driveway and kids here going without any shoooooes!"

Yet it hadn't been a lack of shoes or the money to buy them that originally triggered the strike. Wages had been falling steadily in the area and there were fewer jobs, but these conditions seemed inevitable in Appalachia's sick coal industry, and the miners had not protested against them. What, then, caused the strike? The best answer I could find to that question was in the story of Riley Hicks, a sixty-year old coal-miner, who came up after the meeting to talk to me about what had been going on. Like many of the men of this region, Hicks has lived and worked as a miner here all his life. Even though he was getting only $10 and $12 a day, instead of the union scale of $24.25, he did not quit his job. But in August of 1962 he was one of some 4,000 miners in the Appalachian fields, most of them older men, who without warning received a letter from the United Mine Workers Welfare and Retirement Fund informing them that the "hospital card" which entitled them and their families to free medical treatment would no longer be valid after September 1, 1962. The letter explained that these medical benefits were being taken away from the men because their employers were not paying into the welfare fund the royalty of 40 cents for every ton of coal produced, as provided by the union contract. Riley Hicks went to his boss of thirteen years, six months, and three days, and when the boss said he couldn't pay the royalty and still stay in business, Hicks walked off the job. So did hundreds of others like him in Eastern Kentucky, Tennessee, and, finally, West Virginia.

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More followed a few months later when the union announced that it was not only taking hospital benefits away from its members, but their hospitals as well. In 1955 the UMW Welfare Fund had built ten modern, superbly staffed and equipped hospitals in the Appalachian coal region where adequate medical facilities had not previously been available. Last fall, after cancelling the hospital cards of so many of its members in the area, the union announced that not enough members were eligible for treatment any longer to justify the operation of all the hospitals. The union gave notice that it was offering for sale four of the hospitals in eastern Kentucky, including the one at Hazard, and would have to close them down if they were not purchased by July 1, 1963. (The Presbyterian church led efforts to raise funds for purchasing the hospitals, and just before the July 1 deadline a grant from the federal Area Redevelopment Association and an appropriation from the Kentucky state legislature guaranteed the continued operation of the four hospitals for at least another year. The union is completely out of the picture now, and the hospitals will be administered by a non-partisan "Appalachian Hospital Association.")

I later read in "A Brief History of the UMWA," published by the union, that "America's coal miners will tell you that if John L. Lewis never had won another benefit for them he would be remembered with greatest affection for his winning of this Welfare Fund." Will he now be best remembered for his retraction of it, and the abandonment of the hospitals that serviced it?

The Fund and hospitals were not only a matter of security to the miners but a matter of pride—created out of their own sweat to adorn the barren landscape. The emotions of many of the men about "their" hospitals were voiced by "Preacher Bill" Bailey, one of several lay ministers among the striking miners, who rolled up his sleeves and shouted to the weekly meeting at the union hall: "I helped *build* that hospital in Hazard, and now I can't even go there and get a pill!"

But most of the strikers are reluctant to blame the union for taking back these blessings so briefly bestowed. The UMW, after all, once brought these men the only benefits they have known in a lifetime of grueling work, and even though the union says that it cannot support their strike, their loyalty is still in most cases unshakable. "We can't blame the union for this," Gibson told the strike meeting as he so often had before. "It's our fault for letting this happen, letting these operators get away without paying royalty or scale," and the men called back, "That's right, *our* fault!"

It is almost as if they saw the strike and the sacrifice attendant upon it as an atonement for their sins, a gesture to propitiate the distant union god, so that he might finally smile upon them and grant their plea, which is, as Gibson puts it to answering applause, "to get the union back like it once was." Yet it is hardly the fault of these men that union contracts were not enforced and that the operators were able to slide out from under them as times got worse. In many cases the men knew that payment of scale and royalty by these small fringe operators would mean closing down and the end of their jobs, and they preferred working for low, non-union wages to not working at all.

Who, then, can be blamed for this mess? Prevailing opinion in Hazard was most aptly summed up by Rader "Preacher" Smith, another miner-minister, who told a visiting reporter that "some kinda something has gone wrong here that the men haven't got a fair deal from someplace."

THE REAL forces behind the upheaval in the Appalachian coal fields are vast, complex, and locally invisible; but invisible dragons cannot be slain and men in crisis must go forth against some tangible enemy. How can a working man fight automation? In the first crisis of the Industrial Revolution, the weavers smashed the looms; but the looms in this case—the new machines that can mine hundreds of tons of coal in a day—are not to be found in Hazard. One of the main reasons the coal industry is sick in this region is that the seams of coal in the Appalachian fields are generally too thin to be mined by the huge new machines that are operating in Western Kentucky and the northern coal fields. So in the absence of machines to blow up, the men are blowing up—and in turn being blown up by—their fellow citizens. And in the absence of the real villains, villainous roles have been assigned by each of the two "sides": the ones who have jobs and the ones who don't.

The warlike rhetoric from each of the sides, flavored with the Biblical imagery of a God-fearing region, is as bitter as any that ever accompanied the old family feuds for which these mountains are famous. "Oh, I've lived in many a town," Berman Gibson says, pacing the platform in the meeting hall, "but I've never seen one as bad as this. The way this thing is, I'd like to see fire and brimstone rain down on Hazard and wipe it all out." The women gasp and say, "Oh no!" as if they feared that his word might release the fury then and there, and he says, "Oh yes, my house with it, yessir, my house too!" Nor is the bitterness limited to the miners. A successful local businessman told me that a bunch of troublemakers had caused all the trouble and that "There'll have to be some funerals and fires before this thing is settled."

But the funerals of a few "troublemakers"—whether they are rich or poor—will hardly bring relief from the problems plaguing this region. When one of the miners, who is personally aware of the sentiments of some of the enemy camp (his home

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was dynamited), assured a meeting of the strikers that "They can't kill us all, there's too many of us," they chanted back their "Amens" and "Yessirs" with confidence. "Us" doesn't include only the strikers, whose numbers dwindle and rise as some go back to work to make enough to lay off again; nor does it mean only the miners of this region whose working conditions and pay have grown steadily worse. It means all these plus the many more able-bodied men left in the area who either cannot find work at all or who must work for pay that doesn't suffice to keep them and their families in food and shoes. The strike, with its drama and violence, became an outlet for and a means of protest against the bitter frustrations that have been building up here for a decade. In fact, a few of the men who have joined the strikers and their erratic picket lines are not even miners, and never have been. They are men who have long been out of work, some of them high-school dropouts who took all their savings and pinched their way to Detroit or Chicago, where as "hillbillies" they got into trouble in the strange urban slums and then returned more broke and hopeless than before.

Each of the men who gathered those long afternoons at the union hall to sit and talk and boil coffee on the potbellied stove had his own story to tell, and most of them were eager to tell it to anyone who wanted to listen. In general they tended to be older men, but there were some young ones, like Manuel Stidhan, who at thirty-three had been to Detroit but came back because this was home. "I've worked in these mines around here for $4 a day," he told me, "and that wasn't 1930, brother, that was 1961. You hear these fellas talk about the 'old days,' but I want to tell you the old days are back." One man known as "Hoss," toothless and in his late fifties, had left his job when the strike first began, and when I asked why, he paused for a moment and then said frankly: "Well, I tell you boy, I've worked in these mines all my life, and to tell you the truth, I was tired." Another miner who had a wife and three children showed me his last paycheck stubs for $10 a day: "It's tooth 'n' toenail just gettin' by on that, and without the hospital card you can't make it." He said he'd worked in Utah for a while on a farm and "I dunno why I ever come back to this dry old mountain. Way things is, I'd like to get me in one of them jets and *go,* far as it'd take me outa here—anywhere."

THOUGH NOT by jet, a million people with similar sentiments have left Appalachia since 1950, twelve thousand of them (out of a 1950 total of 46,500) from Hazard's Perry County. It is sometimes said here that "Them with get up and go, got up and went." Those who have stayed behind are mostly the older men, many of them men with no other skills but "swingin' a pick and slingin' a shovel"—skills for which there is constantly less demand and less pay. In eastern Kentucky the number of workers employed in coal-mining—the area's main industry—has dropped from 57,000 in 1950 to 25,000.

The only alternative to "funerals and fires" their more affluent fellow citizens seem to have found so far is the hope that more of the miners will decide to leave. Mrs. Martha Nolan, the business manager and unofficial "spokesman" of the Hazard *Herald,* a woman sincere in her prejudices, who was born in these mountains and is dedicated to them by her own lights, expressed a widely held sentiment in the business community when she said of the strikers: "These people are like a cancer on us. I believe a great many of these fellas are on the picket line because of their unskills for other jobs. They've picked up the torch for jobs that just aren't here."

While Mrs. Nolan sat in the small front office of the *Herald* discussing the local "cancer" with me, a man came in to announce that "the Walters boys were dynamited last night." The Walters boys, I was told, are two brothers who own several of the hundreds of small truck mines that are now the principal type of operation in the Hazard coal fields. Eager to see what a local battleground looked like, and where the "coal kings" lived, I accepted Mrs. Nolan's invitation to go see the damage.

The Walters lived a few miles out of town just off the main road in small-frame one-story houses that could hardly be described as the grand homes of wealthy business tycoons. The brothers are fairly typical of the operators in these fields today; they are sons of a retired member of the UMW and former miners themselves who scraped a little money together after the war and "went into the mining business." There were no Cadillacs in the driveway. A small creek strewn with garbage ran in front of the house, and a muddy path served as a sidewalk. A workman was putting new glass in a broken window and hunks and splinters of shattered glass sparkled in the yard. Mrs. Nolan knocked at the door of one of the houses and it was partially opened by a young woman wearing slacks and a sweater who held her arm protectively around the shoulders of a small boy. The woman, Mrs. Luke Walters, explained that the house of her brother-in-law, Mark Walters, next door, had suffered the most damage. The blast had shattered the glass in the window of the room where Mr. and Mrs. Walters were sleeping, and only a drawn venetian blind had saved them from injury. Mrs. Nolan expressed her sympathy, and Mrs. Walters nodded. "It's gettin' so you're scared just to go to bed at night," she said.

I didn't sleep too well myself in my room at the Grand Hotel that night. The sense of crisis was heightened by the casual presence of more guns than I have ever seen outside of a military installation. The state of Kentucky outlaws the possession of a "concealed deadly weapon," but it is legal to

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have guns that are not concealed, and in the homes both of owners and miners, guns were lying everywhere—on coffee tables and on the tops of television sets—as well as on the seats of cars. The local clergyman seemed to be right: this conflict was "pure war."

It is, however, a peculiarly American war. The New York *Times* has reported that in Hazard "the class struggle is a reality," to which I would add that it is also an illusion. One of the incidental tragedies of the situation in Hazard is that a complex upheaval whose origins lie outside the region should have been interpreted in the "class-struggle" terms of which the *Times* speaks, in an attempt, perhaps, to make it more comprehensible and more familiar—a re-enactment of the battles of the 30's when the poor miners were rising up against the rich mine owners. The wrong people are being fought here for the wrong reasons, and perhaps even for the wrong goals. After my brief time in Hazard, talking with people of diverse views, I came away with the impression that the stakes in this battle that seemed more vital—and certainly more emotionally charged—than the issues of medical care, dignity, and opportunity could be summed up in two words: cars and money.

I HAVEN'T heard so much talk about cars since my high-school days. The miners "accuse" the businessmen of driving Cadillacs, and the businessmen "accuse" the miners of driving Chevrolets. The night I attended the strikers' meeting, one of the men got up to announce that his little girl had been razzed in school because her father had a new Chevrolet. The other kids had said (repeating what they had heard their parents say) that someone was paying the men to strike by giving them new cars. The Chevvy-owning striker explained for the record that he had paid for his new car himself, out of his social security money, and that not one penny had come from "outsiders."

The Cadillacs of the wealthy are one of Berman Gibson's oratorical standbys (they never fail to draw a powerful response), and other workers—not only strikers—constantly parrot the theme. When a taxi driver took me to the home of a local banker, he said: "I'm not sure which house is his —you know, these big fellas move all the time—but I'll recognize his *Cadillac*" (pronounced with venom). Several New Yorkers who were down there on their own visits and talked to me after I returned had picked up the "car charge" and cited the possession of Cadillacs—"some of 'em have two in the driveway," they echoed Gibson, "we saw 'em!"—as proof of the evil profiteering of the local businessmen. But these same observers, I would guess, would scarcely cite the possession of Cadillacs by Harlem Negroes as a sign of evil profiteering. I had the dismal feeling that if revolution ever came to Hazard it would only mean, to paraphrase Yeats, that a beggar in a Cadillac would change places with a beggar in a Chevvy.

As for money, nowhere else, including literary cocktail parties, have I heard more talk about it than I did in Hazard. Everyone accuses everyone else of having too much and complains of not having enough—this is as true of the businessmen as the workers, for the businessmen seem to resent the unemployed getting money and food from the government and buying Chevrolets as much as the unemployed resent the businessmen getting profits and buying Cadillacs. A Hazard taxi driver told me that "Every man has two chances in his life to get rich. I missed my first one when people were makin' so much here during the war they didn't want to see it end and I had to be off fightin.' But I've got one more chance, and I've already got me fifty dollars saved up to buy what'll get me rich." I asked him what it was and he said, "It's something called a 'Spanish Rod.' You know, the kind you take out in the hills, that tells you where gold is." He turned around, eyes gleaming, and announced without a trace of irony: "There's gold out there in them hills."

The cars of the workers do not really mean they are riding high on the easy streets of the Welfare State; they buy their cars, like the TV sets that most of them have (even in homes where the children go without shoes), on the installment plan. It almost seems that the major social advance since the 30's lies in the fact that the poor man today has more to be dispossessed of when he goes broke; whereas he only used to lose his furniture, his stove, and his refrigerator, now they take his car and TV set away from him too.

So the poverty in Hazard is not, on the whole, of the starving kind. It is, however, of the bare-existence kind that offers meal and beans and flour and not much hope: a gray new frontier of malaise and weary stagnation. Nor is the wealth that exists in Hazard of the ostentatious sort; the gap is not between mansions and shacks (as I was told by some of the New York visitors there who seem to think that a two-story home is a mark of vast riches) but between middle-class suburban-type houses and small, modest ones. These small houses are often flimsy in structure (especially back in the hills) but most of them are a far cry from the unpainted dirt-floor shacks that are commonly found in the rural areas of Alabama and Mississippi.

THIS, THEN, was the general picture I got during my stay in Hazard. But there are also things to be learned from looking at some of the principal people, local and national, who have been caught up in the conflict and who have a special interest in the course it will take. Here are seven of them:

ED JOHNSON is a former mine operator who is not, strictly speaking, involved in the current battle (ex-

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cept as an expert partisan observer) because he was blown out of business in a dark-of-night attack on his mine equipment during a strike in 1959 when he was operating non-union. None of the three men I telephoned who are currently operating mines in the Hazard field would talk to me, but Johnson, who is sidelined anyway and no longer has to fear calling attention to himself, reluctantly agreed to a meeting. He told me at the start that he didn't think anyone was interested in his side of things, and indicated his estimate of my own intentions by periodically flipping through a Sunday sports section during our conversation and occasionally reading aloud the local high school basketball results.

We talked in Johnson's office in the now defunct Bluegrass Mining Company, where he sat at his desk below a newspaper clipping pasted to the wall with a headline reading: "Failure Rate for Business at High Level." He said that his family had been in the mining business in Hazard since 1917 and that he himself had operated coal mines for thirty years until "in the mid 50's we couldn't pay royalty and scale and all our mines went out of business."

The basic problem in the coal fields, he told me, was that "wages have gone up and prices have gone down" since the end of World War II, but this was only one of the troubles. Competition from gas and fuel oils, conversion of railroads from coal to diesel engines, and the sharp drop in the use of coal for domestic heating have hurt the coal business everywhere. The answer for the big companies has been cheaper and higher productivity through the use of automated equipment, but since such equipment is unsuitable for most of the small-seamed Appalachian mines, the big companies that had long been operating there moved out. And, as they moved out, local former miners and small businessmen—who, as Johnson put it, "got a few dollars together and a few pieces of equipment and went out and dug themselves a hole in the ground"—began to move in.

These "dogholes," sometimes operated by four or five men who "gang" together to work the mine and divide up what they make at the end of the week, are one of the main types of small "truck mines" that now do practically all the mining that is still being done in the Appalachian fields. The coal from these mines has to be loaded on trucks and shipped to a railroad ramp for loading in cars, which adds to the expense, and they can hardly compete with the big automated mines to the north and west. Yet all are under the same industry-wide contract agreement forged by the UMW after the war. While many of these truck mines originally signed up under the union contract, few could pay the contract wages or royalty for long. By 1961, 70–80 per cent of the truck mines in Kentucky were failing to pay a cent of the 40¢-a-ton royalty into the union Welfare Fund. The union officials admit that at least half the truck mines in eastern Kentucky would have to shut down if forced to comply with the contract. "Most of these small operators," Johnson told me, "are just hanging on by the skin of their teeth. They've got an investment in it and can't get out."

JOHN L. LEWIS lives in Washington now, but his presence still looms across the coal fields of eastern Kentucky where he organized the miners in the bloody battles of the 30's. Portraits of him hang like household idols in countless miners' homes, and many of the miners' sons are called "John L." His power is felt not only through the decisions of the past that changed the course of the coal industry, but even now, for though president emeritus and officially retired, he still wields a strong hand in union policy.

John L. does not sympathize with the plight of the marginal truck mine operators who can't afford to pay union scale and royalty payments. As he said a few years ago: "I cannot sorrow for those pallid, underfed, ill-nourished operators of small mines who can't keep up with the economic procession. They can't live under the rule of competition as it now exists in this free enterprise nation. . . . "

But defending free enterprise against these "pallid" operators has become a difficult mission for the union. In January of 1958 the UMW Welfare Fund brought suit against one such small operator, the Phillips Brothers Coal Company of Tennessee, for unpaid back royalties due the Fund. But the "pallid" operator in this case sued back, charging that the UMW was conspiring with large coal operators to drive the small mines out of business. In the course of the trial, it was learned that the UMW had become a stockholder in some of the nation's biggest coal companies, as well as related businesses such as a railroad and a steamship company that haul coal. The union was found guilty of violating the Sherman anti-trust act by conspiring with large coal companies to monopolize the soft coal industry, and the Phillips Brothers Company was awarded $325,000. The case is being appealed by the union, but now other small operators are suing on similar grounds.

Caught between the union and the small operators are the thousands of miners whose problems don't seem to be anyone's concern but their own. While the union takes full credit for bringing about automation in the coal fields—"American coal operators would never have mechanized their mines unless compelled to do so," Lewis has declared—it does not take responsibility for the effect of automation on the tens of thousands of its members who have been put out of work. Lewis has explained that the union decided "it's better to have half a million men working in the industry at good wages, high standards of living, than it is to have a million men working in the industry in poverty and degradation." This is a noble goal, but its estimates have already been far outrun. Today not half a million men are

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working in the coal industry in the U.S., but only 160,000—and many of them, like those in the Appalachian fields, are back to the conditions of "poverty and degradation" that had once supposedly been eliminated by the Union's enlightened policy.

HARLEY CALDWELL lives in Hazard with his wife on a UMW pension that was cut, as they all were several years ago, from $100 to $75 a month. Caldwell is a proud, straight-backed man who was born in Perry County, worked thirty-five years in the mines, and married and raised three children here. The children are grown and gone to distant states, and the Caldwells live quietly in a small immaculate house, saving a little out of their pension to indulge once a year in a fishing trip. When the trouble began last August, Caldwell was one of a number of retired miners who contributed what money they could from their pensions to help the strikers, wrote away to men in other locals to ask for help, and collected food and clothing for the families of the men who had left their jobs.

Caldwell does not blame the union for the current problems, any more than do most of these men, who credit what little they have from a life of hard labor to the UMW. "If it wasn't for the unions" Caldwell told me, "I couldn't have built myself a small house and educated my family. When I started in the mines I loaded coal for 22¢ a ton—you had to load ten ton of coal to make $2.20 a day. Out of that you had to buy your own powder to shoot the coal and your own carbide and lamp. When the union first came in we got a 15 per cent over-all raise with the contracts and fringe benefits, and it kept going up till the scale is $24.25 a day now."

He explained that his own local, which is made up now of retired men, "is sympathetic with the pickets as long as they're lawful. We gave them moral and financial support and we still do." But Caldwell differs with some of the strike leaders, for he feels that any money coming in ought to go "for food, not for lawyers' fees." As one of the fund-raisers for the strikers, he has been contacted by people in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia offering help, and though grateful for it, he feels that "some of these people who have come in here are using the miners for guinea pigs, as scapegoats for their own ends. I won't accept anything unless I know where it comes from. I have to be thoroughly convinced of that first—I wouldn't suck an egg to find out whether it was rotten."

MILTON ROSEN lives in New York City, where he edits a monthly called *Progressive Labor*. I don't know whether or not he has actually been to Hazard, but he has written to the editors of the Hazard *Herald* offering to come to Hazard and "debate publicly—in front of the miners—your alleged pro-labor record." Mr. Rosen's angry letter was in answer to a story in the *Herald* called "Communism Comes to Kentucky," in which it was alleged that "Reds" had moved into Hazard to aid the striking miners. Mr. Rosen was incensed at this charge because representatives of the Progressive Labor Movement had been in Hazard to help the strikers, and *Progressive Labor* had put out an issue which had been distributed there to explain the true meaning of the strike to the unsophisticated townspeople. As Mr. Rosen explained in his letter to the editors of what he called "Your rag," "The coal kings have provoked the strike. . . ." He was angered by the "hypocrisy" of the *Herald,* assured them that *Progressive Labor* was not trying to mislead the strikers, and was disgusted with the charge that Communists had come to Kentucky.

Where, indeed, did the editors of the *Herald* get such an idea? Perhaps it was from reading the January, 1963 issue of *Progressive Labor*—the one that was distributed in Hazard—for inside, on a page called "PL Action," was a reprint of a story from the University of North Carolina's *Daily Tarheel* which attributed the following direct quote to Mr. Rosen in a speech before the "New Left Club" in Chapel Hill:

> " 'We American Communists are few in number and the stakes are high,' said Rosen, 'but if we are to take advantage of the state of discontent and the injustices in the U.S., we must press the socialistic movement at all costs. We must maintain the outlook of smashing the ruling party.' "

The intrusion of an element so identified into the already greatly confused Hazard mess is unfortunate, for it enables the enemies of the strike to call the whole thing a "Communist plot," an interpretation as erroneous, albeit as convenient, as *Progressive Labor*'s view of the troubles as a class war precipitated by the local "coal kings." It has also created factions among the miners themselves—who of course don't want to be called "Reds"—at a time when they need all the cooperation and mutual trust they can muster. I heard the miners discuss this issue at their meeting, and most of them had some trouble even pronouncing the word "Communist." It came out something like "Commus." One angry man said: "Hell no, we're not any Commuses, we're not smart enough!"—a statement which brought gasps and cries of "No, don't say *that*" from the women. Most of them have learned their lessons well enough to refuse help from the Reds—but how are they to know who is who and what is what in the sudden inundation of parties, organizations, publications, and committees with their strange and confusing names?

By the time I arrived in Hazard, the town had already been visited by representatives of *Progressive Labor*; the Young People's Socialist League; the Socialist Party (one YPSL complained that an SP man had been sent to make sure that the YPSL

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people would come back with the right political interpretation of the situation); several New York union locals; various student groups from various colleges; and a couple of actors from the Living Theatre. In New York, the General Strike for Peace, an anti-bomb group, had held a rally for the striking miners of Hazard at the Living Theatre, featuring a showing of Eisenstein's movie *Strike*. A young lady activist who had been to Hazard explained that it wasn't "quite" like the film.

The term "coal mine" elicits in the breast of the average liberal the same thrill that the word "Polaris" brings to the contemporary right-winger, and Hazard has accordingly given many liberals a nostalgic cause and a chance to get out the guitar and sing about the miners again. (*Progressive Labor* has reprinted some of the words of a 30's song, "Which Side Are You On?" written about the struggle in Harlan County, which contains such timely lyrics as: "You are either a union man or a thug for J. H. Blair.") Yet in spite of their illusions, and in spite of the confusion they have brought, all the groups mentioned above also brought food and clothes and money to the Hazard miners: and who else came to this far-off province to offer them any help?

BERMAN GIBSON had never been outside Appalachia until by default and determination he became the principal leader of this protest. Now he has spoken at Cornell University, attended a Teamsters' square dance in Brooklyn, and generally expanded his cultural horizons. His blunt and angry speech-making has won food and clothing and money from political groups as well as from sympathetic locals of the Teamsters, Steelworkers, and Longshoremen. He has somehow held the thing together, maintaining his leadership over the "moderates" who want to give food and clothing to everyone who needs it instead of just strikers, as well as over the "radicals" who want to bring in Jimmy Hoffa instead of waiting any longer for the ghost of John L. Lewis to appear.

Gibson is a big man with slightly protruding upper teeth and an expanding waistline, a man whose rages are brief and quickly change to smiles and back-slapping. He faces several dangers as leader of the strike: one is that he or his home will be blown up, and another is that he will be dressed up in blue jeans and a miner's cap and paraded through colleges and rallies to the tune of guitars and forgotten songs, a kind of living relic to be patted and admired and misrepresented.

Gibson comes not so much out of the mines as out of the transient underside of American life that is so seldom written or talked about and so often experienced. He has moved from town to town in the Appalachians, working as a farmer, a miner, and a truck driver; his last job was driving an ice-cream truck for the Dixie Bell dairy in Hazard. In some places Gibson has got into "labor trouble," as in Carr Creek when his house was shot at during a strike, and his son, a star basketball player, used to drive home from games with an axe on the front seat of the car beside him for protection—a bit of Americana that surely deserves preservation. But towns wanted the Gibsons because of the son's ability at basketball, and his performance on the court for Hazard High School made the name Gibson well-loved by all. Then he went off to college (the University of Kentucky having given him a scholarship) and the Gibson name became known in a different way as his father kept attending the strikers' meetings, where he talked loud and angrily and found that men would listen. Gibson's daughter, a high-school cheerleader, comes to the meetings and cheers for her father on the platform just as she does for her brother on the basketball court.

DEWEY DANIEL is president of the People's Bank in Hazard and served as state Republican chairman for Kentucky when John Sherman Cooper ran for the Senate. He is obviously a man who moves with ease in the great world beyond the mountains, but his cosmopolitanism seems hardly to have tainted his social views, which are mostly reminiscent of *Dead Souls*. When I talked with him, Mr. Daniel seemed amazed by the fact that after a CBS-TV program on Hazard (which he felt was distorted) people throughout the country sent food and money and clothes to the poor. It especially chagrined him that a Hollywood studio had sent in a plane-load of toys at Christmas. "Can you imagine," he asked, "giving toys to those mountain kids?"

Mr. Daniel has helped raise money to save a small charity hospital in the town which may also close (its load was very heavy, for the union hospital did not take charity patients), but like most of the town businessmen, he appeared unconcerned about the probable loss of the large, modern Miners' Hospital. "If they built too expensive a hospital, that's their problem. This town was here before the hospital was, and it will be here after it goes."

Mr. Daniel was the only Hazard businessman who talked with me openly and pleasantly, for he was obviously indifferent to what I would later report. "I don't care what you say about me," he remarked with a smile, knowing that no comment I could make would shake his place in the world, which is president of the bank in Hazard. I left him with a certain admiration, in spite of myself.

LEE CRUTCHFIELD, befitting his station as president of the local Chamber of Commerce and Cadillac-Chevrolet dealer of Hazard, is a businessman more in the modern manner. Unlike Mr. Daniel, he was disturbed by the bad "image" Hazard had been getting in the press, and he assured me that the story had been blown up out of all proportion. Sitting in his office below a picture of President

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Kennedy, Crutchfield spoke with measured control and a fixed smile. "You can find anything here you look for, Mister Reporter—the worst squalor or the finest luxury." He insisted that not even the local "labor trouble" was unusual—his own sales, for instance, had been "about average." As for the shootings, burnings, and dynamitings: "Why, the same thing happens right off Broadway. Besides, these dynamitings haven't destroyed a single percentage point of productive capacity. It's pretty normal for the course." Smiling firmly, Mr. Crutchfield assured me that Hazard was "just an average American community."

He may be right about that, more than most of us would like to think.

THE EPILOGUE to this story is set in Washington, that remote command post where our leaders deliberate upon the Big Picture. There the great international headquarters of the unions sit in grand testimony to the triumph of the working man, while inside, staffs of researchers produce statistics showing the benefits won in the years before the headquarters were built, and other researchers worry about such current problems as the use of leisure time. (After leaving Hazard, I attended an AFL-CIO conference in New York on leisure time where nothing was said about the kind of problems I had seen in Kentucky, but where it *was* suggested that labor contribute to the President's cultural "renaissance.") There seem to be no working men in Washington, only reporters, researchers, and congressmen—a circumstance which no doubt gives to the high-level work of the labor leaders a sense of reality that might otherwise be lacking.

At the offices of the United Mine Workers' *Journal* I was greeted by a man who did not wish to be identified by name but only as a "Union Spokesman." The Union Spokesman said that "under present conditions" he saw no way for the union to back the striking miners in Hazard. I asked if there was any way for the union to reconsider its decision to close the hospitals; after all, even though the UMW Fund was losing money in that particular area it was profiting in other places. (The UMW Welfare and Retirement Fund comes to more than $100 million, and the union has another $100 million in its own treasury.) "We are not," the Spokesman answered, "in the hospital business." I then asked him if the union had undertaken any kind of job retraining program for those of its members who had been put out of work by its own proud policy of bringing automation to the coal fields. "No," said the Spokesman, "we believe that is the function of the Federal Government."

Over at the "Federal Government," the replies were more elaborate. The Kennedy administration's answer to the problem represented by Hazard is a new branch of the Department of Commerce called the Area Redevelopment Administration. I met with two ARA spokesmen in an office decorated with a wall map of the nation on which the depressed areas were colored in red. The red part seemed to extend over what I would judge to be close to "a third of a nation," and of course took in all of Appalachia. I asked one of the spokesman if he had ever been to Hazard. "God no," he replied, "those places depress me." However, a second spokesman said that he had recently been near Hazard along with the head of the agency on a visit to Paintsville, Kentucky—but first he sketched in the Big Picture.

The ARA, in the hope of creating new jobs, makes grants and loans to businesses in depressed areas, and also carries on a program of job retraining. As of last spring, a total of 18,000 men throughout the entire nation had been retrained under the program. An indication of the local impact can be seen from the fact that in Kentucky, where 65,800 were unemployed at the time, the ARA had spent $4.3 million in grants and loans to businesses which will create (eventually) an estimated 1,225 jobs, and had retrained 2,000 workers for new jobs. Of the 2,000 workers thus retrained in Kentucky, 1,000 had been unable to find the new jobs they had been retrained for. In Perry County, where 14.2 per cent of the work force was unemployed that month—roughly two and one half times the national average—the ARA had created no new jobs and provided job retraining for exactly forty-five people. The ARA officials seemed pleased with their program, though as one of them noted, "I couldn't say in good conscience we have made a dent in the problem. The main effect so far has been psychological." A non-psychological estimate of the effects was made by Fred Luigart, who after spending several hours questioning the ARA officials in Paintsville, was entirely confirmed in his earlier judgment of their work: "You can quote me as saying that the Kennedy program in eastern Kentucky is a total failure."

The most interesting thing I learned on my visit to the ARA office was that the agency is very hopeful about the future of one of our fastest growing industries: tourism. One of the spokesmen told me that in five years, tourism would be a bigger industry in the U.S. than agriculture. "You see," he explained, "we really *are* an affluent society, and if only the affluent people will take their vacations in the depressed areas, things will get spread around." As it happens, several businessmen I had met in Hazard also had this idea, and in anticipation of the first modern highway that will soon be cut through the eastern Kentucky Mountains, they had already formed a corporation to build luxury motels and other such lures around the town. The corporation is called "The Magic Mountain."

You ought to see those old deserted coal mines in the Spring. . . .

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MARTIN BUBER

INTERPRETING HASIDISM

In the October 1961 issue of COMMENTARY, *Gershom Scholem, commonly regarded as the leading authority on Jewish mysticism, criticized* MARTIN BUBER'S *interpretation of Hasidism for failing to pay sufficient attention to the actual history and philosophy of the movement and for reading into its texts a number of Buber's personal speculations. Early this year, Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer, in the German collection,* The Philosophy of Martin Buber (*W. Kolhammer Verlag*), *also criticized Buber on somewhat the same grounds. The following essay—translated from the German by* MAURICE FRIEDMAN—*was written in response to these two critics.*

THERE ARE two different ways in which a great tradition of religious faith can be rescued from the rubble of time and brought back into the light. The first is by means of historical scholarship that seeks to be as comprehensive and exact as possible. The scholar takes this former tradition as an object of knowledge; he edits and interprets the texts of its teachings, investigates its origins and background, its phases of development, and the ramifications of its schools. The primary and controlling purpose of this type of investigation is to advance the state of historical knowledge about the body of religious faith in question—though it may also contribute to the instruction of future generations in the faith. Such a task of historical reconstruction and clarification requires the objectivity and detachment that make the scholar what he is. He must, to be sure, decide which materials are important and need to be treated directly and fully, and which are secondary and can be left in the background. In arriving at these decisions, however, he must follow strictly the principles of historical research and present the primary data as comprehensively and exactly as possible.

The other, and essentially different, way of restoring a great buried heritage of faith to the light is to recapture a sense of the power that once gave it the capacity to take hold of and vitalize the life of diverse classes of people. Such an approach derives from the desire to convey to our own time the force of a former life of faith and to help our age renew its ruptured bond with the Absolute. The scholar bent upon unearthing a forgotten or misunderstood body of teaching cannot accomplish this renewal, even if he succeeds in establishing a new interpretation. To effect such a renewal one must convey the reality of the way of life that was once informed by these teachings, the life of faith that was lived by exemplary individuals and by the communities they founded and led.

An adequate knowledge of the tradition in all its spiritual and historical connections is necessary to insure that a genuine renewal may take place. However, the work of transmitting the old faith to one's contemporaries does not require a complete presentation of all these connections, but rather a selection of those manifestations in which its vital and vitalizing element was embodied. And this, in turn, requires an act of judgment which rests not upon the customary objectivity of the scholar, but upon the reliability of the man in the face of his special task. As long as he performs it with fidelity, he should not be judged by external criteria; for what may appear to be mere "subjectivity" to the detached scholar can sooner or later prove to be necessary to the process of renewal.

Secondly, the man who faithfully and adequately tries to communicate the vitality and power of this faith should not be expected to turn away from the traditional reports concerning its former life in order to give primary emphasis to the doctrine to which the founder and his disciples appealed for their authority. Even in the founding of the great world religions (which are not in question here), the essential is not a doctrine comprehensible in itself but an event which is at once life and word. But it is also right to re-

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fuse the demand to give primacy to doctrines even where religious life reaches back to a much earlier doctrine in order to establish its legitimacy. An old teaching as such never engenders a new life of faith in a later age. Rather this new way comes into being within the context of personal and community existence and signifies a far-reaching transformation despite the persistence of traditional forms. At the time of its birth, as well as in the stages of development that follow, the new faith assimilates itself to an old doctrine, appeals to it, indeed finds in the doctrine its own origin. Certainly, in the life of the founder, elements of this doctrine already appear to have fused with his own experience of faith, but with modifications characteristic of the way of life that his own mode of existence has initiated. In the following generations of disciples and disciples of disciples, such modifications may be discarded to the point where the original doctrine rigidly prevails, but in the next generation vital experiences of faith may again renew its power.

Such is the case, as the evidence shows, with Hasidism and its relation to the Cabbala (especially to the later, "Lurianic" Cabbala). The man who remains true to the special task of renewing the vitality of that Hasidism is obliged to proceed selectively: he must know precisely what he is to include in his work and what he must hand over uncontested to the scholar who follows the principles of historical completeness.

II

Gershom Scholem objects that my interpretation and presentation of Hasidism rest largely upon its legendary writings and neglect the theoretical literature that was produced fifty years before them in the age "in which Hasidism was actually productive." Now, in order to deal with the question of the lateness of the legendary writings in Hasidism, it is necessary to understand the genre in the history of religion to which they belong. My term for this genre is "legendary anecdote." It comprises short —often brief—stories which are built almost entirely around a saying of one of the masters of the "mystical" teachings: the event is the occasion on which the saying was made.

I know of only three great instances in the history of religion in which this genre was fully developed: the legendary literatures of Sufism, Zen Buddhism, and Hasidism.* Although both Sufism and Zen, like Hasidism, produced significant theoretical works, it is the legendary tale that stands at the center of their religious-historical development.

I by no means wish to imply that the doctrinal side of religious mysticism is necessarily less significant than its literary manifestations. Such generalizations seem to me very dubious. For example, Tor Andrae, in his recent *Islamische Mystik,* asserts that theology is in greatest danger of failing to understand religion when it deals with mysticism; however, I find that he has no specific arguments to support this proposition. Nor would I wish to compare the value of a classical Taoist tale with that of the texts handed down under the name of Lao-tse, or that bold offspring of German cloister mysticism, the Story of Sister Katrei, with a sermon of Meister Eckhart. From these examples it is clear that one must distinguish between two kinds of mysticism. The kind to which I point here is the one whose essential development can be seen most clearly in the *mode of lived realization,* and thus in that of the *event.*

To clarify this distinction, one can compare two representative forms of Islamic mysticism—the teachings of the 10th-century theologian, Al-Junaid, which were decisive in the development of the doctrine, and the teachings of his contemporary Al-Hallaj, who was condemned and executed because of his avowal of identity with God. Many of the teachings of Al-Junaid have been preserved in the form in which he wrote them; aside from his poetry, Al-Hallaj expressed himself only orally, and these oral utterances we know from the story of his life that has been handed down, interspersed with his sayings. There can be no doubt concerning which of the two provided the original inspiration of Sufism, or, for that matter, which of the two was decisive for the later period of Sufism. The relationship to God characteristic of the Sufi mystics is so basically an existential one that no theoretical discussion can do it justice, and the only suitable vehicle for expressing this relationship is the anecdote that embodies the utterances of the Sufi masters either during their intercourse with God or testifying to it. Indeed, we possess testimonies of Sufi mystics that warn, either tacitly or openly, of the danger of theory. One of them says that when God is well-disposed to His servant, He opens the gates of deeds for him and closes the gates of discussion.

* The Franciscan legends might be thought to qualify, but they differ in their manner of origin. Certain Taoist texts could be included in the genre but Taoist literature, generally speaking, is an example of parable rather than of anecdote.

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A similar relation exists in Zen, though in an entirely different form which is harder to grasp. Quite apart from the writings that have been handed down as fundamental doctrine, there developed a class of literature altogether peculiar to Zen, the "Koan"—a word that is customarily translated as "example" but is more exactly understood as "demonstration." It takes the form of a concise report of meetings framed by introductory "hints," "elucidations," poetically elevating "songs," and other forms. In the course of the "demonstration," a basic problem is stated, whether directly or not, that proves to be insoluble in speech. No sentence of the teaching is equal to this paradox, whose solution is found to lie in some essential attitude of the human person that breaks up all conceptualization. Especially characteristic of the Koan are the reports of meetings between a teacher and disciple in which the latter asks a question and receives an apparently absurd answer or a reply in the form of a peculiar kind of cry, or else is beaten, thrust aside, driven out. And ever again we read that precisely in the moment of being radically refused, the disciple experiences the "enlightenment" that comes solely from the indescribable mystery of the event, which is reported—or better, narrated—just as it happened.

In both, in Sufism and in Zen, the innermost core discloses itself to us in the narrated event—in Sufism in the legends of the intercourse of the master with God leading to "union," in Zen in the Koan which time and again indicates how truth happens.

The third type of legendary anecdote is the Hasidic. Again, an utterance of one of the masters stands at the center of a narrated event. In Hasidism these utterances or sayings are reported as spoken to disciples, to members of the community, to strangers, and also directly to God. The didactic character of the legendary anecdote is developed in Hasidism in incomparably stronger fashion than in Sufism and Zen. The story may often have a manifold significance, but it almost always either culminates in a saying or at least clarifies itself through one. Some of the "miracle stories" are an exception; but in others the narrated miracle carries a saying, a lived teaching, preserved in this form.

III

THE THREE movements of mysticism I have set alongside one another not only developed a similar type of legend, but also have in common the fact that these legends were first formed and transmitted orally and only recorded much later. Their theories, by contrast (with the characteristic exception of the founder of Hasidism who at times seemed to have radically preferred the oral to the written), were set down by those who originated them, or else by their immediate disciples.* The author of the life story of the above-mentioned Al-Hallaj lived much more than a century after the death of the martyr, and composed his narrative from the material provided by Al-Hallaj's son. So far as we know, the legendary biographies of other Sufi masters have come down to us in a similar fashion—that is, in biographies organized around the sayings of a master who testified with his life and thereby bequeathed the image of the "perfect man."

Much the same process—although in a completely different form—is evident in the literature of Zen. The original core of the Koan literature is the report of an encounter between one of the masters and his audience that has been going from mouth to mouth. This is the "cloud of witnesses" of which we hear. In the course of generations, monks would note down "demonstrations" that were especially important to them. Then gradually collections of these materials came to be made, in "literary" form, and with elucidations and songs added. Centuries after the initial reports, a scripture thus evolved. Indeed, a later writer looked back with some scorn on this tradition as the "Zen of reflection on anecdotes."

We find the same duality again in Hasidism; in fact, it becomes especially clear here. The coherent doctrine was almost always written down by its proponents themselves or transmitted to their disciples for this purpose. On the other hand, the stories containing the masters' sayings were already preserved for the most part during their lifetime by word of mouth and recorded only years afterward. In Hasidism, then, we have a late but strong example of an oral tradition of mysticism that attempted to preserve the living spirit of its teachings by retaining their connection with the situations out of which they sprang as the sparks from steel. In the history of human faith, whenever there is a pressing need to transmit the *factual* character of the spoken teaching to the future generations and to save it from the danger of "objective" conceptualization, the tendency is to keep the teaching tied to the happening that bore it, to hand it down as part of the personal

* In this respect as well, the Franciscan legends are different: the legend is composed and edited for the sake of the Order.

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occurrence from which it is inseparable. Nothing can do this so well as oral transmission which is always assisted by tone and gesture. In the course of such transmission, to be sure, other materials that do not belong to the original begin to invade the tale, and in order to prevent further corruption a member of the faith will finally set it down in writing. This stage is followed ultimately by the practice of making a collection of those tales which belong together. In the Hasidic collections an attempt to preserve the oral character of the transmission was made by recording, wherever possible, the names of earlier figures who relayed the legends along with the legends themselves.

It thus becomes evident that the late transcription and collection, and, above all, the late publication of the cycles of mystical legends, give no support to the assertion that they are of questionable value as sources. The standard collection of the legends of the Baal-Shem, for example, did not appear in print until fifty-five years after his death. What does that prove about their authenticity? In general, the reliability of oral tradition in the history of religion still remains to be adequately comprehended, despite the important scholarly investigations we possess.

IV

My presentation of Hasidism is not a historical one, for I do not discuss the Hasidic teaching in its entirety and do not take into account the differences that have prevailed among the various trends within the Hasidic movement.

Since about 1910—the point in my study of Hasidism when I began to deal with basic sources (my earlier work had not been sufficiently grounded in them)—I became conscious that my task would necessarily be a selective one. Though I did not aim to be comprehensive, either historically or hermeneutically, I was ever more firmly convinced that my principle of selection was not derived from a subjective preference, but rather from the same assumptions that informed my work on Judaism in general. In treating the life and teaching of Judaism, I have attempted to keep to what I believe to be its own proper truth and its decisive contribution in the past and future history of the human spirit. It goes without saying that my attitude includes an evaluation of what is the central truth of Judaism and Hasidism. But such evaluation—on this point, no doubt has touched me during the whole time—has its origin in the immovable central existence of values that in the history of the human spirit and in the uniqueness of every great religion has again and again given rise to those basic attitudes concerning the authentic way of man. Since having reached the maturity of this insight, I have not made use of a filter; I *became* a filter.

Still, it must be possible to characterize this filtering activity objectively, i.e., to explain why that which was admitted was rightly admitted, and why that which was left to one side was rightly left to one side.

Gershom Scholem correctly says that Hasidism produced no mystical doctrine that went essentially beyond the Cabbalistic tradition in which "personality takes the place of doctrine."* Looked at in terms of its theories, Hasidism is, in fact, purely derivative. But looked at in terms of the personal lives of its leaders—which we are able to reconstruct through the unexampled fullness of the notes of their disciples, once having separated out the purely legendary—Hasidism shows itself to be the bursting forth of a powerful originality of the life of faith, to which very few episodes in the history of religion can be compared. Scholem has described Hasidism as a "revival movement," but where in the world has there ever been a "revival" with such power to inspire individual conduct and communal enthusiasm for seven generations?

As we have seen, the Hasidic literature that relates the lives of the masters can be compared typologically to that of Zen Buddhism, the Sufis, and at fewer points, the Franciscans; but none of these movements was empowered by so enduring, vital, and intimate a connection to everyday human life. One must immediately add that—in contrast to these other movements—the spiritual leaders of Hasidism were not monks: they were the leaders of communities composed of families. In Zen, Sufism, and Hasidism alike, we find a prevailing devotion to the divine that seeks to hallow each day of life; however, in Zen and Sufism the consecration of one's life is borne by an ascetic limitation of conduct, even when it involves going among the people to bring assistance and instruction. Hasidism firmly extends this hallowing to the natural and the social life. Here alone does the whole man, as God has created him, enter into the hallowing of the everyday.

Scholem is right in saying that *devekut,* the "cleaving" of the soul to God, became the central

* Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism,* (Revised ed.), Schocken Books, p. 338 ff., 344.

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tendency of the Hasidic teaching. But it must be added that this traditional doctrine of Judaism took two different forms in Hasidism. The *zaddikim* who sought—if, as has been said, unsuccessfully—to elaborate the Cabbalistic teaching, held to the view, already familiar to us from Gnosis, that one must lift oneself out of the "corporeal" reality of human life into the "nothingness" of pure spirit in order to achieve contact with God, whom the Bible had already named "the Lord of spirit in all flesh." In contrast to this form of *devekut*—though there was no explicit contest between them—one also finds in Hasidism the belief that the "constant being with God," as Scholem calls it in connection with Psalm 73, is to be reached by dedicating to God the totality of the life that a man lives. In the Talmud (b. Ket. III) the question of how one could serve God with the evil urge as well as the good had been answered: by doing what one does with the right *kavvana,* with dedication to God, and thus hallowing it.

The way of spiritualization comes into Hasidism with its great thinker, the Maggid of Mezritch; the second way, the hallowing of all life, was introduced by his teacher, the Baal-Shem-Tov. The Baal-Shem often based this teaching on two Biblical sayings: "In all thy ways know Him" (Proverbs 3:6), and "Do all that your hand finds to do with all your strength" (Ecclesiastes 9:10). He interprets the first saying: "It is necessary that even every bodily thing that you do be in the service of a higher need . . . all for the sake of heaven." And the second: "That he acts with all his limbs according to the knowledge, and thereby the knowledge is spread to all his limbs." Of course, only "the completed man," says the Baal-Shem, can wholly fulfill this command. "The completed man may accomplish high unifications [i.e., unite God with His *Shekhina,* dwelling in the exile of the world] even with his bodily actions, such as eating, drinking, sexual intercourse, and transactions with his fellows over bodily things . . . as it is written: And Adam knew his wife Eve."

Among the *zaddikim* closely associated with the Baal-Shem, it was above all Rabbi Yehiel Mikhal of Zlotchov who developed this teaching, even though after the Master's death he attached himself to the great Maggid. The word of the Bible, "Be fruitful and multiply," he expounded thus: "Be fruitful, but not like the animals, be more than they, grow upright *and cleave to God as the spring clings to the root,* and dedicate your copulation to him."

From what I have cited, it is evident that the inner dialectic between transcending earthly life and hallowing it does not belong to a later development of Hasidism, but is already apparent in its earliest stages. It is clear, furthermore, that the teaching of hallowing the everyday provides the original thesis, and that the doctrine of spiritualization comes later with the increasing influence of the Cabbalistic tradition. To be sure, the doctrine of spiritualization already accorded to the *zaddik* a direct influence through the hallowed human life on the divine sphere. But again and again, in sayings, parables, and tales, the Baal-Shem and many of his disciples praise the simple, ignorant man whose life-forces are combined in an original unity and who serves God with this unity. Even in this lower unspiritual form, the undivided existence of man affects the higher spheres.

A real criticism of the Cabbalistic doctrine of spiritualization was made only later, however, and, as it were, incidentally. It did not take the form of a new systematic doctrine that directly challenged the doctrine of spiritualization, but rather was embodied in a new mode of life that had to come to terms over and over again with the received mode of life. This criticism is found in the teachings of a *zaddik* of the fifth generation, who was concerned with restoring the original meaning of prayer: as man speaking directly to God.

TO UNDERSTAND this development, it is necessary to go back a bit. In place of the immediacy found in Biblical prayer between the personal being of the praying man and the being of God, which is not purely personal but which stands in a personal relation to the praying man, the Cabbala substituted forms of meditation whose subject is the inner structure of the divinity, the configurations of the *"Sefirot,"* and the dynamic prevailing among them. According to the text of the prayer, God is still the partner in a dialogue between heaven and earth. But the theosophy which has been added to the prayer alters God's role to that of the object of an ecstatic contemplation and action. In line with this change, the text of the traditional liturgy comes to be covered by a net of *kavvanot,* or "intentions," that lead the praying man into an absorption with the words and letters and with the practice of prescribed mutations, especially approximate vocalizations of the Tetragrammaton.

The Hasidic movement took over uncritically the Cabbalistic prayer book that was formed in this manner; the Baal-Shem himself sanctioned it. This state of affairs inevitably divided the com-

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munity into the simple folk, who used their prayers to still the need of their hearts, and the "higher men," who took upon themselves the meditational or theurgical task of prayer. This division soon threatened the fundamental community between the *zaddik* and his Hasidim.

Among the great men of prayer in the third generation was R. Shmelke of Nikolsburg, who sought to bridge this gap by raising the level of the community's prayers, on the one hand, to a concern with the *Shekhina*'s return and to other more intense forms of devotion; on the other hand, in the hour of common prayer he himself prayed with the community, or rather came forth from it to lead the prayers. Another *zaddik,* R. Levi Yitzhak of Berditshev, entered wholly into the free dialogue practiced by the common people. However, R. Shlomo of Karlin regarded his own praying—manifestly no different from the conventional praying of the *zaddik*—as a theurgical venture which only he could undertake ("perhaps this time too I shall still not die").

It is perhaps not surprising that a disciple of a disciple of R. Shlomo, R. Moshe of Kobryn, should have become the one to warn against this split. Asked about the secret *kavvanot* of prayer by an author of Cabbalistic writings, R. Moshe answered: "You must keep in mind that the word *Cabbala* is derived from *kabbel*: to accept; and the word *kavvana* from *kavven*: to direct. For the final meaning of all the wisdom of the Cabbala is to take on oneself the yoke of God's will, and the final meaning of all the art of *kavvanot* is to direct one's heart to God." The life indicated by the primal faith of Israel, the life of devotional cleaving to the Lord of life—to accept whatever happens to me from the hands of God and to do whatever I do as directed to God—is thus opposed to the hypertrophy of faith produced by mystical-magical doctrine. The original insight of the Baal-Shem into the fundamental need for an immediate and reciprocal relation to God that is attainable by man and that is able to encompass his whole life finds its expression in the words of a disciple of the fifth generation who had grasped the simple basic meaning of prayer that had been obscured by later Cabbalistic doctrine.

What is at issue here is not a spiritual matter that affects life to some extent but remains mostly above it: R. Shlomo's teaching is directed to the question of living itself. When one of his disciples was asked what had been most important to his teacher, he replied: "Whatever he happened to be doing at the moment." By accepting and dedicating whatever is happening here and now, intercourse with God is achieved in the experiences of daily life. Of the two modes of behavior—passively accepting and actively dedicating—the active is the more important. "You shall," it is said, "'become an altar for God." On this altar *everything* shall be offered, according to the elaboration made by the Baal-Shem of the Cabbalistic teaching of the holy sparks present in all things and awaiting redemption.

THE RIFT between God and the world is not closed but bridged over, though with the paradoxical instruction that man constantly set foot on the invisible bridge and thus make it real. It is for this purpose that man is created and so, too, the things of this world that belong to each individual, which, as the Baal-Shem says, "with all their might entreat him to draw near in order that the sparks of holiness that are in them may be raised": in other words, that they may be brought to God through him. Therefore man, according to other sayings of the Baal-Shem, shall "have mercy on his tools and all his possessions," and each action shall be directed "to heaven." We know from the first-person sayings of the Baal-Shem that he excluded nothing corporeal from this intention. Thus in the Polnaer tradition, which is undoubtedly true to the teaching of the Master, the relation between body and soul is compared to the relation of a husband to a wife: each is only half a being and needs the other half to attain the fulfillment of life.

Is this not "realism" enough? Nor, to use Scholem's term, can one find any "nullification" of the concrete whatsoever in *this* line of Hasidism —which begins with the beginning of Hasidism itself. The beings and things that we hallow continue to exist undiminished; the "holy sparks" that are "raised" are not thereby withdrawn from the forms of man's earthly life. According to the teaching of the Baal-Shem, there is, to be sure, an art of "liberating" the "holy sparks" which otherwise wander "from stone to plant, from plant to animal, from animal to speaking being." But when he says, "All that man has, his servant, his animals, his tools, all conceal sparks that belong to the roots of his soul and wish to be raised by him," and therefore "entreat him with all their might to draw near them," it is certainly clear that no form of annihilation is involved but rather a dedication, a hallowing that transforms without loss of concreteness. Consequently, the Baal-Shem can also include sin in this teaching—although with a different meaning from the one that Sabbatian theology gives to the inclusion of sin in

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the holy. "And what sort of sparks," he asks, "are those that dwell in sin?" To which he answers: "It is the turning. In the hour when on account of sin you carry out the turning, you raise the sparks that were in it into the upper world." Again, this is not a nullification of the corporeal but a bridging of the two realms.

The essential point has been expressed even more clearly perhaps by a great *zaddik,* R. Pinchas of Koretz, who is properly regarded as a comrade rather than a disciple of the Baal-Shem. There are no words or actions, he teaches, that are idle in themselves; one only makes them into idle words and actions when one talks and acts idly.

The critical problem of Hasidism, according to Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer, a disciple of Gershom Scholem, is "that life split apart for it into external action on the one side and inner intention on the other." But this is not true. Hasidism itself was not faced with this problem, only its spiritualistic tendency, which, to be sure, won the upper hand in the school of the Maggid of Mezritch. It is only here, in the doctrine of the Mezritch tradition, that one finds such terms as "sensory appearance." But wherever the new mode of life became stronger than the doctrine that grew out of the Cabbalistic tradition, the world of concrete daily experience was again emphasized for the sake of a hallowing that became a matter of "decision" rather than a "problem." In sum, the inner dialectic of the Hasidic movement is that between an unoriginal Cabbalism that remained the property of "spiritual" men and a religious life with the world which was unprecedented in its capacity to seize hold of one generation after another.

That is the basis of my selection. I have chosen what I have chosen; rather, I have let Hasidism go through my heart as through a filter because here is a way, one only to be sensed, but a way. I have stated this principle time after time with what appeared to be sufficient clarity.* It seemed clear enough to me that I was concerned from first to last with restoring immediacy to the relation between man and God, with helping to end "the eclipse of God."

Given this objective, my selection has necessarily emphasized the unjustly despised "anecdotes"—stories of lived experience—and "aphorisms"—sayings in which lived experience documents itself. The "anecdotes" tell of the life of the *zaddikim*; the "aphorisms," which originally were spoken by the *zaddikim,* express this life in particularly pregnant ways.

The central significance of the *zaddikim* is that they constitute the common and sustaining center of the movement from the beginning—provided, of course, one regards Hasidism not only as theory but as practice that is interpreted by the teaching. Among the great *zaddikim,* two kinds can be clearly distinguished: the *zaddik* who is essentially a teacher and whose decisive effect is on his disciples, and the *zaddik* who is essentially a helper and whose decisive effect is on the people. This is no minor distinction, for it expresses, among other things, precisely the inner dialectic we have been bringing to light. The first kind of *zaddik* is to be identified mainly with the spiritualizing elements; the second kind with *realizing.* In the person of the Baal-Shem both roles are still united; after him they diverge. In the intellectual history of the movement the decisive figures are the great teachers and heads of schools, like the Maggid of Mezritch, R. Elimelekh of Lishensk, and the "Seer" of Lublin. The popular life of the movement, however, is concentrated in such figures as the Berditchever, R. Zusya, and R. Moshe Leib of Sasov. The latter are purely unique products of Hasidism.

The *zaddikim* of the second kind, along with Baal-Shem, seem to me unique in their feeling of the essential relatedness of the elevated man, who has found the unity of the material and spiritual, to the simple man who, from his much lower spiritual position, can still truly devote himself to God. What the Baal-Shem said to his Hasidim about the faithful stocking-weaver—"Today I have seen the foundation stone that bears the holiness until the Redeemer comes"—is preserved, not in the teaching but in the legends, as a statement of primary importance. And a whole garland of similar tales of the Baal-Shem have been handed down, with the legendary ones supplementing the authentic.

V

THE GREAT Hasidic contribution to the belief in the redemption of the world is its assertion that each man can work for this redemption but none can effect it. This is an insight common to all the tendencies within Hasidism. Because of the inner dialectic of the movement, however, two different teachings are again evident. The one asserts that man can work

* Most recently in the conclusion of the Foreword to the new edition of *For the Sake of Heaven* (Meridian Books, 1953) and in the title essay of *Hasidism and Modern Man,* edited and translated by Maurice Friedman (Horizon Press, 1958).

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for the redemption of the world by exerting a magical influence on the divine configurations; the other asserts that man can do so only by "turning" with his whole being to God and doing everything that he does henceforth for God. He thereby enhances, in a measure corresponding to the strength of his "turning," the capacity of the world to be redeemed: he "brings it nearer" to the heavenly influence.

That is the basic theme of my book *For the Sake of Heaven,* the one full-scale narrative that I have written. I wrote it because I wanted to make the inner dialectic that was visible and coherent to me visible and coherent to the man of today. Let me try here to clarify it once again.

According to the "metaphysics" of the Seer of Lublin, the demonic force already active in the Napoleonic wars could be intensified to the point where it would shake the gate of heaven and God would come forth to redeem the world. In opposition, not to this Cabbalistic doctrine itself, but rather to its magical undertakings, the "holy Yehudi" taught a simple human "existence." He would have nothing to do with the world-historical Gog—whose wars bring the human world to the chaos from which redemption shall proceed—but confronted instead the dark Gog in our own breast. He called for the transformation of this latter Gog through the "turning"—that is, through giving direction to the indispensable passion so that it might become a force of light working directly for redemption. One should not depreciate this message by identifying it with this or that modern train of thought. To call it "anthropocentric" does not make sense to me; it is rather bipolar. The "holy Yehudi" reaches back both to the prophets of Israel—who exhort us to "turn" before God "turns" from the "flaming of his wrath"—and to the idea expounded in the Talmudic age that all eschatological combinations having taken place, redemption now depends upon the human "turning" alone. In the teaching of the Baal-Shem this traditional concept finds its mystical expression in the saying: "The beginning is up to you. For if the power of procreation first stirs in the woman, a male child is born."

That the "holy Yehudi" was deeply committed to this way to God is clearly shown by his saying, reliably transmitted by R. Shlomo of Radomsk: "Turn, turn, turn quickly in the turning, for the time is short and there is no longer any leisure for further wanderings of the soul, for redemption is near." According to the tales I heard in my youth, this was in fact the kernel of the sermon that he repeatedly gave in varying contexts on his "great journey" through the Galician villages. The meaning of the call is clearly this: that man must accomplish the decisive movement *now,* without depending on the idea that his soul still has time to ascend to higher forms; for now the sphere of redemption has drawn close to our world and henceforth the important thing is to draw it at once to us.

The interpreter of Hasidism who in deep and dispassionate seriousness attempts to relate this controversy between "metaphysics" and "existence" to the problematic nature of our own world hour will recognize that all forms of magical gnosis in the end only mean an attempt to flee before the command of our human reality into the darkness above the abyss.

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NATHAN GLAZER

THE GOOD SOCIETY

IT USED to be—it seems to have been so even yesterday—that people with a reforming bent of mind knew, or thought they knew, what they meant by the "good society," and they knew, or thought they knew, what forms of social action ought to be taken in order to achieve it. In the 1930's radicals and liberals alike were relatively secure in their attachment to first principles, and each group was guided by a firm assurance as to what such words as "progress" and "justice" meant, and what means were necessary to bring about a society in which all men could finally live together contentedly, creatively, and as brothers. The history of the great reforming movements—of Communism, socialism, anti-colonialism, the American labor movement—did much to break down this assurance. By the 1950's the reigning temper had become skeptical—skeptical of "ideologies," skeptical of blueprints for the future, skeptical of human possibility itself.

Conceivably we are better off for having learned to become aware of all the questions wrapped up in terms like "liberalism" or "progress" or "justice" or "the good society." Yet it may also be that by understanding too well how ambiguous both our means and our goals are, we have become unable to improve things even in the limited ways which our more complex view of society and its problems suggested.

As the Eisenhower Age ended—that age which had so perfectly expressed and symbolized the loss of reformist élan—some of us joined in the new spirit of social enthusiasm that began to be felt in this country. For the first time in some years, people were talking passionately about the problems of our cities—about housing, about delinquency, about discrimination, about urban poverty. Skeptical of all ideologies, we still hoped something could be done about the quality of life in our society—about the meaninglessness of work in a technological civilization, about the growth of organization, about the pointlessness of our patterns of production and consumption, about the effects of an economy so dependent on huge defense budgets. Knowing as we did that neither our goals nor our ideas for arriving at these goals were all that certain or even all that good, we could nevertheless denounce ourselves and others for not concealing our doubts and determinedly pursuing what we realized would at best be only minor improvements. Now a new mood of malaise and exhaustion is beginning to overtake us, and we wonder where there is to go from here.

Paul Goodman, in *Growing Up Absurd,* compiles a list of revolutions that have failed in the last hundred years—changes that were set into motion but were never quite consummated: political revolutions, economic revolutions, ethical and moral revolutions. A failed revolution is itself an ambiguous notion. Did it fail because the forces of evil and reaction were too strong? Or did it fail because there was no way for it to succeed, because its vision of "success" contained contradictory elements that could not, in history, be brought together in a stable compound? Did it fail because those attempting to carry it out realized at some point that the good to be attained was disproportionate to the effort required? Did it fail, in other words, because what it attempted to achieve, while undoubtedly good, did not after a while seem good enough?

The latter set of questions, I think, points to the pattern that is characteristic of our own day. For two revolutions which have become closely linked unfortunately *did* succeed—the organizational revolution and the scientific revolution—and their

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success makes any others infinitely difficult to bring off. The technology of science permits the organization to become ever larger and more effective. And the steady rationality of scientific thinking applied to organizational problems seems to overcome some of the chief characteristics and perhaps weaknesses of organizations in the past—their rigidity, their lack of dynamism, their stubbornness. Perhaps these characteristics once permitted us, like primitive mammals around a dinosaur, to outwit the organization, to achieve changes without the exhausting investment of unlimited energy that is now required. But we have suddenly arrived at a point when even the biggest organizations we have—such as the defense forces—can, by the power of a rational analysis, be made flexible. With the help of a newly developed technology for analysis, those great giants, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, have by now, we are told, been bent together to common ends, despite their traditions, their organizational character, even their alliances with Congress.

Compare the present situation with one that many of us can recall from only twenty-five years ago. In those days, we—some of us, at any rate—attacked the threat of a $1,000,000,000 budget for national defense. There were no intellectuals in the armed forces then—if there were, intellectuals outside the armed forces did not know them. Or think back to the State Department of those days. Perhaps radical and liberal critics of the 20's and 30's, in their ignorance, caricatured professional military men and professional diplomats. Perhaps these men were not as inadequate and self-seeking as we imagined. But the gap between them and us was so great that we could in good conscience denounce and caricature them, and honestly believe that we would do much better if we only had the chance. To intellectual critics, men of affairs in the 20's and 30's clearly stood in the way of the obvious steps to a much better society. And I am convinced this was no illusion, just as the contempt the men of affairs had for their "impractical" critics was based on no illusion either. Military men, diplomats, corporation presidents, disinherited radical intellectuals—all stood far apart from each other and distinct; each could see the limitations, stupidity, inadequacies of the other. The system permitted those of us who stood outside it to hate it; and in contrast to that system, it was easy to imagine something better. When we looked at limited people and bound institutions, it was easy to believe that, when the limits and bonds were burst, something newer and cleaner and fresher would emerge.

THE BONDS were never burst. Rather, they were loosened. The tension between inside and outside relaxed, and as it relaxed, as more interchange between those inside the system and those outside began taking place, it became harder and harder for the outsiders to hate with such healthy directness. It is not only that the critics began to understand the problems of those who ran the organizations; the organizations themselves loosened up to the point where the critics were put into a position of being able to see what those problems were and what the representatives of the status quo were actually like. Indeed, the representatives began even to include some of the critics.

The critics were included or listened to for a number of reasons. One, perhaps, was that the authorities decided that this would be a good way to draw the claws of the critics: weakening the opposition by enfolding it. Another, perhaps, was that the authorities had lost some of their old self-confidence. But more important than either of these reasons was the rise of the new techniques for making organizations more efficient. These techniques—computerization, operations research, management education, "buzz sessions," and so on—exert a far stronger pressure on the organization to include its critics than the old Machiavellian notion of buying them off by bringing them in. The pressure now comes from the principle that everything, or almost everything, is relevant, or may be relevant, to the solution of a problem or the heightening of efficiency.

It is because so many factors are relevant that techniques and technologies have been developed for considering the joint impact of a host of diverse forces in a given area of activity, the effect each of these forces has on every other, and how they can be expected to operate, both jointly and singly, at every stage in a long-run process. The application of science to social problems thus means that many "inputs," many different kinds of knowledge, are required. The inputs required, for example, in national defense, now include in addition to the special expertise of military men, that of economists, industrial managers, political analysts, psychologists, sociologists, town planners, psychiatrists—not that I would exaggerate the influence of these latter three or four categories. Indeed, a properly developed national defense policy would even have to take into account the information and insights of pacifists and those who oppose the current military establishment. And in fact, I am reasonably sure that a department as well organized as Mr. McNamara's is actually making use of these inputs too.

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Naturally when one tries to feed into the decision-making machine the special knowledge that critics may have, amenable critics of the organization are likely to be the easiest kind to work with. But as we become more refined in our use of inputs (and this is the ever constant demand of the organizational and technological revolution), even the critics whose insights we need will be categorized—into amenable and unamenable: those who work for the organization, those who work under contract, and those whom we can only get to give an occasional lecture.

I HAVE suggested that one of the things that has happened to our conception of the good is that the effort to achieve it seems, in many spheres, to be disproportionate to what we might conceivably accomplish. The disproportion is created by a number of factors, of which the first is the process we have just been talking about: the sophistication of the existing organizations under the pressure of new scientific and rational techniques. The "lead time," so to speak, of intellectual and radical critics is growing ever shorter. Their ideas are taken up; they are taken up. Paul Goodman, when he wrote about the movies in the early 1940's, was probably not read by a single person who "counted" in Hollywood. When he writes about television today, Newton Minow, I assume, reads him and David Brinkley writes letters to the *New Republic* to argue with him. I doubt that this is because he is not as radical today as he was then. The explanation is rather that the organizations are more sophisticated, more in touch with advanced ideas than they used to be. Yet the paradoxical consequence is not that such ideas exert more influence than they once did, but that they are often robbed of their bite and of their influence on the general opinion by being fought against in a highly sophisticated manner.

But even where the organizations are not sophisticated so far as ideas are concerned, the organizational revolution has at least proceeded to the point where they are more efficient than they used to be so far as their own ends are concerned. They cannot easily be gotten around. And if they cannot be gotten around, the critics are forced to work with them at *their* pace and on *their* terms: who, then, is influencing whom? Only a few targets of a traditional sort still remain—that is, people and institutions that we can consider so stupid, vulgar, and selfish that we can hate and fight them without quarter. Such a target is offered by Southerners who insist on maintaining white superiority; or by Russian cultural commissars. There is certainly a large enough agenda here to keep active people busy. Enough clear evils exist to work against, even though the largest evils—for example, the threat to the world of nuclear war—unfortunately do not present as unambiguous a target as white supremacists or Communist commissars.

But apart from such relatively clear cases, those who want to change the world into something better become less and less certain about just how it can be done. Many writers have already commented on how hard it is for our generation to construct a utopia—I mean in the mind, let alone in reality. We can imagine various kinds of "anti-utopias," based on the spreading power of organizations and the correlative helplessness of individuals. Even without knowing anything about operations research and high-powered computers, George Orwell was able to work out a terrifying model along these lines. But what is our picture of a desirable future toward which to strive? Kenneth Boulding, as imaginative and creative a social scientist as we have, has written an article, "Where Are We Going, If Anywhere: A Look at Post-Civilization," in which he attempts to picture the best we can hope for if all goes well, and we are not destroyed by atomic bombs, by the population explosion, or by the exhaustion of those natural resources necessary to civilization. While he does not go into any very specific detail about the conditions requisite to our survival, it is clear that we must first of all envisage some truly elaborate international organization—at least as elaborate as our Department of Defense—that would control the great weapons. It is naïve to think of going back to the halcyon age before they existed; the knowledge of how to make them cannot be eradicated, and undoubtedly, therefore, the International Control Organization would have to maintain a very large research and testing establishment to make sure that it knew how to make them better than anybody else. It would probably also have to have on hand a few weapons bigger and better than anybody else could put together on short notice. We can scarcely imagine the kind of organization we would need to control the birth-rate, but it would also be impressive.

What kind of society would this fabulous triumph of political ingenuity permit to exist and to flourish? Let me quote from Professor Boulding:

> It is perfectly possible to paint an anti-utopia in which a post-civilized society appears as universally vulgar or even universally dull. On the whole, however, I welcome post-civilization. . . . Post-civilization is a realization of man's potential.

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> . . . It at least gives us a chance of a modest utopia, in which slavery, poverty, exploitation, gross inequality, war and disease—those prime costs of civilization—will fall to the vanishing point. . . . The masses will live scattered about the surface of the earth, commuting occasionally to semi-automatic factories and offices, or will snuggle down with three dimensional TV at the end of the day. Modest as these visions of utopia may be, there is no guarantee that we will reach them. . . .

We can add some embellishments—maybe, for example, they would get to and from work by monorail. But can we really do much better than that—even in imagination? Let us be as free and unburdened by practical considerations as we wish, and try to visualize what America would be like if we had our way. Sweden today? Let us pour it on a bit heavier. Would we all live as people do today in Scarsdale? Or would we perhaps all live in art colonies?

Of course, even if we cannot plan any ultimate utopias, there is still work to be done. First of all, we have to keep the world intact, and that means preventing a nuclear war. And then there are slum-dwellers to be moved into new homes, jobs to be created for the unemployed, school dropouts to be re-motivated and re-educated, Negroes who should get the vote in the South, discrimination in jobs and housing to be eradicated in the North. The poor countries need assistance, too, to the point where they can have enough to eat and even have the junk that fills up our lives. There is plenty to be done, then, without thinking of how we, and those whom we help, will live when the job is finished. This is a reasonable and forthright and pragmatic point of view. But when we say that on the one hand there is work to be done and on the other that we have no clear conception of what species of good will come into being as the work proceeds, the effect, for some of us, is to weaken our determination to go ahead with even the relatively unambiguous problems that confront our society.

Take, for example, the problem of unemployment, about which we can raise a number of key and unpleasant questions. What sort of work will the unemployed and the young do if we are successful in finding jobs for them? Will they be happy at such work? Do we need the kind of things they will produce? What is required to create enough jobs in the first place? We all know some of the answers: that we will have to encourage speculation and the thirst for profit even more than we now encourage it, by cutting taxes for corporate and other investments; that we will have to expend enormous political energy and negotiate many compromises to get this accomplished; that the new jobs will result in more cars, more superhighways, more developments of little houses on treeless tracts of land. We also know in advance that the men, while they will be happy to have something to do and money to spend, will not be happy at their work. Knowing all this, we are nevertheless expected to fight like mad to achieve it—because the forces that oppose even this much are strong, and on occasion more than a little persuasive.

BUT WHAT if we extended our goals—what if we were to fight not only for more jobs but for more useful and satisfying ones? What if we insisted on putting men to work to build more schools; to develop new recreational grounds for our expanded leisure time; to set up beautiful new towns and cities in our depressed areas; to create rapid and efficient new forms of mass transportation, so we could move pleasantly between work, home, and recreation; to teach people of the underdeveloped countries how to be more productive? Theoretically, all this would be fine, except that solving even the unemployment problem by itself, without regard to any of these other considerations, already seems to be straining our resources of energy and determination to the breaking point. How are we supposed to *reform* society when just getting a small tax cut is so difficult?

Assume, however, that we are successful beyond our wildest dreams, and that we get Congress to cooperate in reform. Do we know *how* to go about the job of reforming society? Consider some simple problems. If we decided to build new schools, we would find many people—including radicals—arguing that we could do as well in old school buildings, or in the open air, or in rented homes; what school buildings did Plato and Aristotle use? If we decided to build new towns in depressed areas, we would find it hard to get people to stay and business to come. If we decided to rebuild our old slums, we would find conservatives and radicals alike attacking the way we were planning to go about it—a way that would have been the best we could manage to get out of an elaborate democratic process of investigation and legislation and compromise. If we decided to expand our recreational facilities, the lovers of wilderness as well as the owners of the land who had been hoping to make a profit from it, would join in opposition.

In England, after about seventeen years of hard work, the New Towns—and New Towns could absorb a great deal of our energy, intelligence,

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and manpower, in a project that would quite clearly improve the condition of our lives—have finally succeeded. But this long-range task has been carried out by a government and administration with far greater authority and continuity than ours can possess. I think we could do such things in this country—but we would have to work five times, ten times, as hard as the English did.

Or consider another way in which we might affect the shape of our society: more social workers, caretakers, people to help the incapacitated and those in trouble. Our proclivity for multiplying social agencies, which de Tocqueville applauded and which is one of our most admirable national characteristics, has by now produced a jungle in which the caretakers are frustrated in their tasks, and in which the energies of many of the best of them are drained by organizational maneuvering, as they try to fit organically related programs and agencies together into some coherent structure. Nor is it easy to get money for these purposes, despite the increasing number of casualties our society produces and the declining capacity of our old social forms to look after them. Conservatives are against spending money for welfare purposes, but neither do we find among the intellectual and radical critics any great love of social work—or many social workers either.

We must note, and this is something to consider very seriously as we survey the prospects for making a better society, that both conservatives or reactionaries, on the one hand, and intellectuals and radicals and anarchists, on the other, often come together in opposition to what we might call establishment liberalism. Thus Paul Goodman, in *The Community of Scholars,* brilliantly attacks big organization in higher education: he does not see the need for anything more than the teacher and the student; buildings, dormitories, deans, administrators, accountants—all this, he says, we can do without. Jane Jacobs, in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities,* similarly attacks traditional city planning as a destroyer of cities. New towns bore her and she urges keeping the disorder we have, nurturing only slow changes, and suspiciously rejecting any large-scale improvements. I know that Jane Jacobs's arguments and her book itself have been used in votes against urban renewal; I am sure someone will use Paul Goodman's book against greater government expenditures for educational plant and facilities. And Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* is another example of criticism that cuts across all traditional political divisions.

Greenwich Village, where Jane Jacobs is the leader of the forces opposed to urban renewal, has been one of the major centers in the fight against establishment liberalism. The Village intellectuals fought the urban renewal project that would have replaced old tenements and factories with new middle-income housing. They fought the police to keep the coffee shops unregulated, the bookstores open on Sunday, the folk singers free to sing in Washington Square. They fought the city to prevent the building of a new road through the Square; and they are now suspiciously questioning the city's appropriation to rebuild the Square, for they are afraid that its shabby familiar spaces will be replaced by something too neat and cold. Their journal is the *Village Voice,* which is apparently read elsewhere in the country, and in which Jules Feiffer ferociously caricatures men who believe they are advancing the good society—and Democrats to boot. Feiffer's cartoons, in fact, are syndicated and appear in a few conservative newspapers in other cities.

What is the image of the good society held by these people who fight endlessly against the police, the park department, the city planning commission, the urban renewal agency—and in a city in which the administration is as "liberal" as any in the country? I cannot say whether they have an image of a *good* society, but they certainly do have an image of the *best* society they feel we can manage under the circumstances. And it is—leave us alone, you with all your good works, and all the city departments and government activities you have developed to create order, and leave us to our own disorder.

In Greenwich Village we find one of the last ripples of the great wave of social reform that moved through this country in the first fifteen years of the century, and then again during the depression, and it all comes down to a single word: Stop. The demands that were raised in the past have in some measure been met—social security, government relief, unemployment insurance, slum clearance, public housing, union recognition, minimum wage laws. Of course none of these reforms is complete; all have created some new problems. We can take the position, spirits as high as ever, that there is still work to be done, that social justice is not yet complete—and indeed it is not. Or we can pay more attention to our own feelings of malaise and exhaustion, or to the Greenwich Village feeling of "leave us alone," and we can look into our assumptions about the nature of the good society, the mechanisms we create to get there, the organizations we start to

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get the mechanisms, the whole machine for doing good. Is something wrong? And is there any way other than the frightfully hard one we have all experienced and that sometimes produces a compromised trickle of change?

I HAVE raised many questions about doing good and building the good society because I share this malaise and discomfort. I go along when we analyze a problem and then urge an organizational solution, because I cannot think of any other. I know it would be better if people took care of each other because they truly wanted to, or because God or nature demanded it of them. But we can exhort forever, and meanwhile the problem is here, and the organization—the substitute for the obligation personally accepted—offers *some* help, and at least convinces us that we are doing *some*thing. Yet I also know what will happen when we set up that organization—any organization, for any problem. There will be, on the one side, the problem; and on the other, the organization to deal with it. The point of contact between the two will be small, and a minuscule of good will finally be accomplished as a result of a mountain of labor, in getting the organization started, and in running it.

There is, it seems to me, only one alternative—to improve the organizations, and to rationalize the relationships between them. I have already spoken of the Defense Department. In their much smaller way, the organizations, public and private, that try to do good are now groping toward means of relating more efficiently to each other and to the problems they have been created to handle. Perhaps, just as the divisions between Army, Navy, and Air Force have been weakened by setting certain specific tasks and missions that cut across the old lines, we will come to a time when the various perspectives of social work, welfare, mental health, education, police work, city planning, commercial development, and countless other departments and organizations and approaches, will be linked through the power of the new organizational technology, and will be able to focus effectively on missions, and to modify themselves flexibly and rapidly in response to quickly diagnosed and analyzed needs.

This is the vision. At the top there will be the analysts and researchers and programmers and computers and the huge machines into which many kinds of data now guarded in the files of separate organizations will constantly be fed and out of which will flow guides and aids to action. The demands on those who manage the great organization will presumably be infinitely more strenuous than those which today affect ordinary executives. For one thing, all perspectives will be relevant; no problem will be bounded, as all are today; every problem will have to be seen in the light of all the factors that may have some reasonably significant effect on it. The present specialties will still exist—the police, the teachers, the employment counselors, the social workers—but they will all be deployed in accordance with the central analysis. And the central authority will have far more information, and will make much better diagnoses of the effectiveness of certain kinds of programs and specialists than can those who run the programs themselves.

Can it be done? Well, the admirals and generals grumble under McNamara, as the education and police and welfare chiefs may grumble under the managers of the big organization in the future. As for the clients of the programs—the people to be helped—they will be so far from the determining center of allocation, as we may call it, that we must assume they will simply enjoy the better, more rationally ordered life that this will create for them. They will not understand how it came about. They will follow the directions, as they now follow complicated road signs, and believe with perfect faith—just as they now believe that to go left they must make three right turns—that they will be taken care of; that someone has wired the machines and set up the organization for the purpose of healing their hurt.

The logic of the situation—the size of our population, the number of our organizations, the extent of our problems, the interrelations between the different parts of our society, the developments of science and technology, the nature of our morality—all point to this outcome. Presumably more people will have more of the things they now lack and whose absence is what they feel is making them unhappy.

Some of us may be reminded by this vision of the world of E. M. Forster's "The Machine Stops," in which the individual lives in a cell, hooked up with the central machine, the big organization, which sees to it that the cell is air-conditioned and provided with food and means of recreation. This is a world in which all forms of complicated connection between people seem to have been destroyed, in favor of their single connection to the machine. And indeed, the organizational machinery we have developed in the modern world in large measure came into being as a substitute for community. In the most advanced countries, such as ours, the historical and natural communities—the families, the ethnic and religious

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and social groups—no longer perform their traditional tasks adequately. Substitutions are necessary, but they are still not as good or complete as they should be; like the first canned foods or powdered milk, they are too far from the original, and they may even lack critical elements that our science has not yet clearly identified. Our welfare system is not as good a way of taking care of those without income as the older systems of group responsibility. Our legal measures and institutions for the aged are not as good as a situation in which their support is undertaken out of a moral and religious obligation. Our formal means of education and training for jobs are probably not as good as traditional systems of apprenticeship. Scientific investigation keeps on discovering inadequacies in our substitutes for these weakened traditional relationships. Thus medicine and psychotherapy, despite their great technical skill and sophistication, seem to need, for greatest effectiveness, settings of human concern and involvement.

BUT ALONGSIDE the organizational solutions which are inevitable and necessary, I think we must do our best to maintain and encourage non-organizational or small organizational approaches. This is why the old forms, ethnic and religious and neighborhood, should not be damaged—they are weak enough as it is. When some thousands of small businesses are destroyed by urban renewal, we have lost thousands of valuable networks of communication, which are enormously difficult—for modern societies almost impossible—to re-create. Artists and anarchists and radicals are always trying to create small communities—it is this perhaps which sometimes links them with arch-conservatives and reactionaries, who are also romantically attached to small communities, but to those of the past. Though these communities, old and new, decline, they should be encouraged; a community is valuable not because it always achieves its formal objectives (it rarely does), but because of the by-products which our society finds it otherwise so difficult to create—friendship, loyalties, connections, memories, attachments. The big organizations, foundations, and governments should consider seriously all those proposals—from Irving Kristol, Paul Goodman, and others—for support, by subsidy and if necessary tax-exemption, of small magazines, television stations, schools, and other community-creating enterprises.

We might envisage, then, alongside the big society, many small societies. They will be composed, if we extrapolate from present conditions, of the religious and the non-religious, reactionaries and anarchists and radicals. They will each be based on the voluntary surrender of something the big organizations give—security, income, material goods, status. They will also provide something the big organized society finds it hard to provide. At worst they will be a museum of old social forms. At best they will exert a stubborn and steady pressure on the big society, to move ahead in a more hopeful and human direction.

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BERNARD MALAMUD

A CHOICE OF PROFESSION

A Story

CRONIN, after discovering that his wife, Marge, had been two-timing him with a friend, suffered months of crisis. He had loved Marge and jealousy lingered unbearably. He lived through an anguish of degrading emotions, and a few months after his divorce, left a well-paying job in Chicago to take up teaching. He had always wanted to teach. Cronin taught composition and survey of literature in a small college town in Northern California, and after an initially exhilarating period, began to find it a bore. This caused him to worry because he hoped to be at peace in the profession. He wasn't sure whether it was true boredom or simply not knowing whether he wanted to teach the rest of his life. He was bored mostly outside the classroom—the endless grading of papers and bookkeeping chores; and for a man of his type, Cronin felt, he had too much to read. He also felt he had been asking from teaching more than he was entitled to. He had always thought of teaching as something religious and perhaps still did. It had to do with giving oneself to others, a way of being he hadn't achieved in his marriage. Cronin, a tall, bulky-shouldered man with sensitive eyes, and a full brown mustache, smoked too much. His trousers were usually smeared with cigarette ashes he brushed off his thighs; and lately, after a period of forbearance, he had begun to drink. Apart from students there were few women around who weren't married, and he was alone too often. Though at the beginning he was invited to faculty parties, he wanted nothing to do with the wives of his colleagues.

The fall wore away. Cronin remained aimlessly in town during the winter vacation. In the spring term a new student, an older girl, appeared in his literature class. Unlike most of the other girls, she wore bright attractive dresses and high heels. She wore her light hair in a bun from which strands slipped but she was otherwise feminine and neat, a mature woman, he realized. Although she wasn't really pretty, her face was open and attractive. Cronin wondered at her experienced eyes and deep-breasted figure. She had slender shoulders and fairly heavy but shapely legs. He thought at first she might be a faculty wife but she was without their combination of articulateness and timidity; he didn't think she was married. He also liked the way she listened to him in class. Many of the students, when he lectured or read poetry, looked sleepy, stupefied, or exalted, but she listened down to bedrock, as if she were expecting a message or had got it. Cronin noticed that the others in the class might listen to the poetry but she also listened to Cronin. Her name, not very charming, was Mary Lou Miller. He could tell she regarded him as a man, and after so long a dry, almost perilous season, he responded to her as a woman. Though Cronin wasn't planning to become involved with a student, he had at times considered taking up with one but resisted it on principle. He wanted to be protected in love by certain rules, but loving a student meant no rules to begin with.

He continued to be interested in her and she occasionally would wait at his desk after class and walk with him in the direction of his office. He often thought she had something personal to say to him but when she spoke it was usually to say that one or another poem had moved her; her taste, he thought, was a little too inclusive. Mary Lou rarely recited in class. He found her a bit boring when they talked for more than five minutes, but that secretly pleased him because the attraction to her was quite strong and this was a form of insurance. One morning, during a free hour, he went to the registrar's office on some pretext or other, and looked up her records. Cronin was surprised to discover she was twenty-four and

BERNARD MALAMUD has been publishing his stories in COMMENTARY since 1950. The last previous one, "Idiots First" (December 1961), will be the title story of his new collection which Farrar, Straus and Cudahy is bringing out in October, and which will include the present story. Mr. Malamud's first collection, *The Magic Barrel,* won the National Book Award.

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only a first-year student. He, though he sometimes felt forty, was twenty-nine. Because they were so close in age, as well as for other reasons, he decided to ask her out. That same afternoon Mary Lou knocked on his office door and came in to see him about a quiz he had just returned. She had got a low *C* and it worried her. Cronin lit her cigarette and noticed that she watched him intently, his eyes, mustache, hands, as he explained what she might have written on her paper. They were sitting within a foot of one another, and when she raised both arms to fix her bun, the imprint of her large nipples on her dress caught his attention. It was during this talk in the office that he suggested they go for a drive one evening at the end of the week. Mary Lou agreed, saying maybe they could stop off somewhere for a drink, and Cronin, momentarily hesitating, said he thought they might. All the while they had been talking she was looking at him from some inner place in herself and he had the feeling he had been appraising her superficially.

On the ride that night Mary Lou sat close to Cronin. She had at first sat at the door but soon her warm side was pressed to his though he had not seen her move. They had started at sunset and for an hour the sky was light. The Northern California winter, though colder than he had anticipated, was mild compared to a winter in Chicago, but Cronin was glad to be in touch with spring. He liked the lengthening days, and tonight it was a relief to be with a woman once more. The car passed through a number of neon-lit mountain towns neither of them had been in before and Cronin noticed that every motel flashed vacancy signs. Part of his good mood was an awareness of the approach of a new season, and part, that he had thought it over and decided there was nothing to worry about. She was a woman, no eighteen-year-old kid he would be taking advantage of. Nor was he married and about to commit adultery. He felt a sincere interest in her.

It was a pleasant evening drive in early March and on their way back they stopped off at a bar in Red Bluff, about forty miles from the college, where it was unlikely anyone they knew would see them. The waiter brought drinks and when Mary Lou had finished hers she excused herself, went to the ladies' room, and upon returning, asked for another on the rocks. She had on a bright blue dress, rather short, and wore no stockings. During the week she used no lip rouge or nail polish; tonight she had both on and Cronin thought he liked her better without them. She smiled at him, her face, after she had had two, flushed. In repose her smile settled into the tail-end of bitterness, an expression touched with cynicism, and he wondered about her. They had talked about themselves on the ride, she less than he, Cronin reticently. She had been brought up on a farm in Idaho. He had spent most of his life in Evanston, Illinois, where his grandfather, an evangelical minister, had lived and preached. Cronin's father had died when Cronin was fourteen. Mary Lou told him she had once been married and was now divorced. He had guessed something of the sort and at that point admitted he had been divorced himself. He could feel his leg touching hers under the table and realized it was her doing. Cronin, pretty much contented, had had one drink to her two, and he was nursing his first when she asked for a third. She had become quiet but when their eyes met she smiled again.

"Do you mind if I call you Mary Louise?" Cronin asked her.

"You can if you want to," she said, "but my real name is Mary Lou. That's on my birth certificate."

He asked her how long she had been married before her divorce.

"Oh, just about three years. One that I didn't live with him. How about yourself?"

"Two," said Cronin.

She drank from her glass. He liked the fact that she was satisfied with a few simple biographical details. A fuller exchange of information could come later.

He lit a cigarette, only his second since they had come in, whereas she squashed one butt to light another. He wondered why she was nervous.

"Happy?" Cronin asked.

"I'm okay, thanks." She crushed a newly lit cigarette, thought about it and lit another.

She seemed about to say something, paused, and said, "How long have you been teaching, if you don't mind me asking you?"

Cronin wondered what was on her mind. "'Not so long," he answered. "This is only my first year."

"You sure put a lot in it."

He could feel the calf of her leg pressed warmly against his; yet she was momentarily inattentive, vaguely looking around at the people in the bar.

"How about you?" he asked.

"In what ways?"

"How is it you started college so comparatively late?"

She finished her drink. "I never wanted to go when I graduated high school. Instead I worked a couple of years, then I joined the Wacs." She fell silent.

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He asked if she wanted him to order another drink.

"Not right away." Mary Lou's eyes focused on his face. "First I want to tell you something about myself. Do you want to hear it?"

"Yes, if you want to tell me."

"It's about my life," Mary Lou said. "When I was in the Wacs I met this guy, Ray A. Miller, a T-5 from Providence, Rhode Island, and we got hitched in secret in Las Vegas. He was a first-class p----."

Cronin gazed at her, wondering if she had had one too many. He considered suggesting they leave now but Mary Lou, sitting there solidly, smoking the last cigarette in her pack, told Cronin what she had started out to.

"I call him that word because that's what he was. He married me just to live easy off me. He talked me into doing what he wanted, and I was too goddamn stupid to say no, because at that time I loved him. After we left the service he set me up in this flea-bitten three-room apartment in San Francisco, where I was a call girl. He took the dough and I got the s---."

"Call girl?" Cronin almost groaned.

"A whore, if you want me to say it."

Cronin was overwhelmed. He felt a momentary constricting fright and a strange uneasy jealousy, followed by a sense of disappointment and unexpected loss.

"I'm sorry," he said. Her leg was tense against his but he let his stay though it seemed to him it trembled. His cigarette ash broke, and while brushing it off his thigh, Cronin managed to withdraw his leg from hers. Her face was impassive.

Mary Lou slowly fixed her bun, removing a large number of hairpins and placing them thickly back again.

"I suppose you have a bad opinion of me now?" she said to Cronin, after she had fixed her hair.

He said he had no opinion at all, though he knew he had. "I'm just sorry it happened."

She looked at him intently. "One thing I want you to know is I don't have that kind of a life any more. I'm not interested in it. I'm interested in taking it as it comes or goes but not for money any more. That won't happen to me again."

Cronin said he was surprised it ever had.

"It was just a job I had to do," Mary Lou explained. "That's how I thought about it. I kept on it because I was afraid Ray would walk out on me. He always knew what he wanted but I didn't. He was a strong type and I wasn't."

"Did he walk out?"

She nodded. "We were having fights about what to do with the dough. He said he was going to start some kind of a business but he never did."

"That's when you quit?"

She lowered her eyes. "Not all at once. I stayed for a while to get some money to go to college with. I didn't stay long and I haven't got enough, so I have to work in the cafeteria."

"When did you finally quit?"

"In three months, when I got arrested."

He asked about that.

"My apartment was raided by two San Francisco bulls. But it was my first offense so the judge paroled me. I'm paroled now and for one more year."

"I guess you've been through the mill," Cronin said, toying with his glass.

"I sure have," said Mary Lou, "but I'm not the same person I once was. I learned a lot."

"Would you care for a last drink before we leave?" he asked. "It's getting late. We've got an hour's drive."

"No, but thanks anyway."

"I'll just have a last drink."

The waiter brought Cronin a scotch.

"Tell me why you told me this," he asked Mary Lou after he had drunk from his glass.

"I don't know for sure," she said. "Some of it is because I like you. I like the way you teach in your class. That's why I got the idea of telling you."

"But why, specifically?"

"Because everything is different now."

"The past doesn't bother you?"

"Not much. I wanted to tell you before this but I couldn't do it in your office without a drink to start me off."

"Do you want me to do anything for you?" Cronin asked her.

"For instance, what?" said Mary Lou.

"If you want to talk to anybody about yourself I could get you the name of a psychiatrist."

"Thanks," she said. "I don't need one. The guy I talk to about myself will have to do it for nothing, for kicks."

She asked Cronin for one of his cigarettes and smoked while he finished his drink.

As they were getting ready to leave, Mary Lou said, "The way I figure, it wasn't all my fault but it's dead and gone now. I got the right to think of the future."

"You have," said Cronin.

On the ride home he felt more objective and not unsympathetic to the girl, yet he was still disappointed, and from time to time, irritated with himself.

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"Anyway," Cronin told her, "You can work for a better way of life now."

"That's why I want an education for," Mary Lou said.

II

IT TOOK Cronin a surprisingly long time to get over having been let down by Mary Lou. He had built her up in his mind as a woman he might want to spend some time with, and the surprise of her revelation, and his disillusionment, lingered so long he felt unsettled. "What's this, Marge all over again?" He didn't want any more of that, and not from this girl. He saw her in class, as usual, three times a week. She seemed to listen with the same interest, maybe less interested, but she didn't approach him and no longer waited at his desk to walk with him to his office. Cronin understood that to mean he was to make the next move now that he knew, but he didn't make it. What could he say to her—that he wished he didn't know? Or now that he knew, that he sometimes glanced at her in class and pictured her being paid off by the last guy she had slept with? She was in his thoughts much of the time. He wondered what would have happened that night they were out if she hadn't made that confession. Could he have guessed from the way she performed in bed that she had been a professional? He continued to think of having her and sometimes the thought was so wearing he avoided looking at her in class. He found his desire hard to bear but after a month it wore down. She seemed not very interesting to him, then, and he was often aware how hard her expression was. He felt sorry for her and occasionally smiled, and once in a while she seemed cynically to smile back.

Cronin had made friends with a painter, George Getz, an assistant professor in the art department, an active, prematurely bald man, with whom he went on sketching trips, usually on Saturday or Sunday afternoon. George sketched or did water colors as Cronin looked on or sat against a tree, smoking. Sometimes he wandered along streams and in the woods. When the painter, married from youth and the father of three girls, was tied down during the weekend, Cronin drove off by himself or tried walking alone, though generally he cared little for walking in town, and wasn't sure which direction to go next. One fine Sunday in April, when George was busy with his family, Cronin started on a walk but it soon began to seem like work so he returned to his apartment and sat on the bed. Wanting company he searched in his mind for who, and after some doubts looked up Mary Lou Miller's number and dialed it. He wasn't sure why he had, though he knew it bothered him a little. "Hello there," she said. She had hesitated on hearing his voice but seemed cordial enough. Cronin wondered about a drive and she said she wouldn't mind. He called for her in his car. She looked a little distant when she came out and he was surprised at how attractive. He noticed she seemed to be prettier on warm days.

"How are things with you?" Cronin asked as he held the door open for her.

"All right, I guess. How are they with you?"

"Fine," Cronin said.

"How's the teaching?"

"Fine. I'm enjoying it more than I was."

Not much more, but it was too much trouble to explain why.

She seemed at ease. They drove toward the mountains along some of the side roads he had explored with George, until they came to a long blue lake shaped like a bird in flight. Cronin parked the car and they went through a scattering of pine trees, down to the water. At his suggestion they walked part of the way around the lake, and back. It took more than an hour and Mary Lou said she hadn't walked that much in years.

"Life's pleasures are cheap," Cronin said.

"No, they're not," said Mary Lou.

He let it pass. They had said nothing about last time, there was nothing to say really. The beauty of the day had lightened Cronin's mood—he remembered having dreamed of Marge last night and had awakened uneasy. But Mary Lou's company, he admitted to himself, had made the walk around the lake enjoyable. She was wearing a yellow cotton dress that showed her figure off, and her hair, to the large thick knot on her neck, was for once neatly arranged. She was rather quiet, as though a word too much might defeat her, but once she loosened up they talked amiably. She seemed to Cronin, as he sat by her side gazing at the lake, no more nor less than any woman he had known. The way he presently saw it was that she was entitled to her mistakes. He was to his. Yet though he tried to forget what she had told him, the fact that she had been a whore kept nagging him. She had known many men, how large a crowd they would make following her, he was afraid to guess. He had never known anyone like her, and that he was with her now struck him as somewhat strange. But Cronin thought what an unusual thing present time was. In the present a person is what she is or is becoming and not what she was. She was this heavy-but-shapely-legged

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girl in a yellow dress, sitting by his side as though she belonged there. Cronin thought this was an interesting lesson for him. The past interfered if you let it. People feared it because they thought it predicted the future. It didn't if you realized how much life changed, and concentrated on what it had changed to, and lived that. He began to think of the possibility of friendship with Mary Lou.

She got up, brushing pine needles off her dress. "It's hot," she said. "Would you mind if I peeled and went in for a dip?"

"Go ahead," said Cronin.

"Why don't you come in yourself?" she asked. "You could keep your shorts on and later get dry in the sun."

"No, I don't think so," he said, "I'm not much of a swimmer."

"Neither am I," Mary Lou said, "but I like the water."

She unzipped her dress and pulled it over her head. Then she kicked off her shoes, stepped out of a half slip and removed her white underwear. He enjoyed the fullness of her form, the beauty of her breasts. Mary Lou walked into the water, shivered, and began to swim. Cronin sat watching her, one arm around his knees as he smoked. After swimming a while, Mary Lou, her flesh lit in the sunlight, came out of the water, drew on her underpants, then let the sun dry her as she redid her damp hair. He was moved by her wet body after bathing.

When she had dressed, Cronin suggested they have dinner together and Mary Lou agreed. "But first you come up to my joint for a drink. I want to show you how I fixed it up."

He said he would like to.

On their ride back she was talkative. She told Cronin about her life as a child. Her father had been a small wheat farmer in Idaho. She had one married sister and two married brothers. She said the oldest brother was a big bastard.

"He's pretty rich by now," she said, "and he talks a lot about God's grace but in his heart he is a bastard. When I was thirteen one day he grabbed me in the barn and laid me though I didn't want to."

"Oh Christ," said Cronin. "You committed incest?"

"It all happened when I was a kid."

"Why don't you keep these things to yourself?" Cronin said. "What makes you think I want to hear them?"

"I guess I felt I trusted you."

"Well, don't trust me," he shouted.

He drove to her house and let her off at the curb. Then he drove away.

The next morning Mary Lou did not appear in Cronin's class, and a few days later her drop-slip came through.

III

A WEEK HAD gone by when Cronin one day saw her walking with George Getz, and his heart was flooded with jealous misery. He thought he was rid of his desire for the girl; but seeing her walking at the painter's side, talking animatedly, George interested, Mary Lou good to look at in a white summer dress and doing very well, thanks, without Cronin, awoke in him a sense of loss and jealousy. He thought he might be in love with her. Cronin watched them go up the stairs of the art building, and though he had no good reason to, pictured them in each other's arms, naked on George's studio couch. The effect was frightening.

My God, thought Cronin, here I am thinking of her with the same miserable feelings I had about Marge. I can't go through that again.

He fought to put her out of his mind—the insistent suspicion of an affair between her and the painter—but his memory of her body at the lake, and imagining the experiences she had had with men, what she would do with George, for instance, and might have done with Cronin if they had become lovers, made things worse. Thinking of her experiences was like trying to stop the pain of a particular wound by stabbing yourself elsewhere. It seemed to Cronin as though his thoughts were like a box of snakes that had fallen and broken apart and the snakes were slithering everywhere. His only relief was to get drunk but when that wore off the anguish was worse.

One morning he was so desperately jealous—the most useless of emotions, and especially useless in a situation where the girl really meant little to him, almost nothing, and the past, despite all his theorizing and good intentions, much too much—that he waited for them for hours, in the foyer of the school of architecture across the street from the art building. Cronin did not at first know why he was waiting but that he had to, perhaps to satisfy himself they were or weren't having an affair. He saw neither of them then, but on the next afternoon he followed the painter at a distance to Mary Lou's apartment. Cronin saw him go in shortly before 5 P.M., and was still unhappily waiting under a tree across the street several houses down, when George came out at half-past ten. Cronin was wakeful all night.

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Terrified that this should mean so much to him, he tried to work out some means of relief. Should he telephone the girl and ask her back into his class so that they could once more be on good terms? Or if that meant trouble with the registrar's office, couldn't he just call and apologize for acting as he had, then offer to resume their friendship? Or could he scare George away by telling him about her past? The painter was a family man, a careful sort, and Cronin felt sure he would end it with Mary Lou if he thought anyone suspected he was involved with her; he wanted to go on feeding his three girls. But telling him about her seemed such a stinking thing to do that Cronin couldn't face it. Still, things were so bad he finally decided to speak to George. He felt that if he could be sure the painter wasn't being intimate with her, his jealousy would die out and the girl fade in his thoughts.

He waited till George invited him on another sketching afternoon, and was glad to have the chance to bring it up then, rather than to have to seek the painter out in his office or studio. They were at the edge of the woods, George at work on a water color, when Cronin spoke of the girl and asked whether George knew that Mary Lou had once been a prostitute in San Francisco for a couple of years.

George wiped his brush with a rag, then asked Cronin where he had got his information.

Cronin said he had got it from her. "She was married to someone who set her up professionally and cut in on the take. After he left her she quit."

"What a son of a bitch," said George. He worked for a while, then turned to Cronin and asked, "Why do you tell me about it?"

"I thought you ought to know."

"Why ought I?"

"'Isn't she a student of yours?"

"No, she isn't. She came to my office and offered to model for me. It's hard to get girls to pose in the nude around here so I said yes. That's all there is between us."

He seemed embarrassed.

Cronin looked away. "I didn't think there was anything between you. I just thought you would want to know, if she was your student. I didn't know she wasn't."

"Well," said George, "I know now, but I still intend to use her as a model."

"I don't see why not."

"Thanks for telling me, though," George said. "I've sometimes felt there's a bit of the slut in her. It wouldn't pay to get involved."

Cronin, feeling some repulsion for himself, then said, "To tell the truth, George, I'm not entirely innocent in this. I've wanted to take the girl to bed."

"Have you?"

"No."

"I almost did," George said.

Though Cronin wasn't sure the painter had or hadn't, he was certain he wouldn't dare be intimate with her now. When he got home he felt relief, mingled with shame that had him talking to himself, but he slept better that night.

IV

A FEW nights later Mary Lou rang Cronin's door bell, walked up the stairs, and when she was admitted into his apartment, said she wanted to talk to him. Cronin, reading in pajamas and robe, offered her a scotch but she refused. Her face was pale, her expression embittered. She was wearing levis and a baggy sweater; the hair spilled out of her bun.

"Look," Mary Lou said to Cronin, "I didn't come here for any favors, but did you say anything to Professor Getz about me? I mean what I told you about San Francisco?"

"Did he say I had?" Cronin asked.

"No, but we were being friendly and then he changed to me. I figure somebody must have told him something, and I thought nobody knew anything but you, so you must've told him."

Cronin admitted it. "I thought he ought to know, considering the circumstances."

"Such as what?" she asked sullenly.

He hesitated. "He's a married man with three kids. There could be serious trouble."

"That's his goddamn business."

He admitted that too. "I'm sorry, Mary Lou. All I can say is that my life has been confused and complicated lately."

"What about mine?" She was sitting in a chair, then turned her head and wept.

Cronin poured her a drink but Mary Lou wouldn't take it.

"The reason I told you those things is because I thought you were a guy I could trust and be friends with. Instead it was the opposite. I'm sorry what I told you got you so bothered, but there's a lot worse than that, and one thing I want you to know is it doesn't bother me any more. I made my peace with my life."

"I haven't," said Cronin.

"I don't want to hear about it," said Mary Lou, and though he asked her to stay she left.

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Afterward he thought, she has learned something from her experience that I haven't learned from mine.

And he felt sorry for Mary Lou for the way he had treated her. It's not easy to be moral, Cronin thought. He decided, before he went to bed, not to come back to this college in the fall, to quit teaching.

ON Commencement Day, Cronin met Mary Lou on the street, in her yellow dress, and they stopped to talk. She had put on weight but wasn't looking well and as they talked her stomach rumbled. In embarrassment she covered her abdomen.

"It's from studying," she said. "I got awfully worried about my finals. The doctor in the infirmary said to watch out or I might wind up with an ulcer."

Cronin also advised her to take care. "Your health comes first."

They said goodby. He never saw her again but a year later, in Chicago, he had a card from her. She wrote she was still at college, majoring in education, and hoped someday to teach.

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Non-Rule by Congress	DAVID T. BAZELON
Pius XII and the Nazis	LÉON POLIAKOV
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The Indian and the Negro	LESLIE A. FIEDLER

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OBSERVATIONS

THE CHILDREN OF BIRMINGHAM

Paul Goodman

In the almost excessive reporting and other coverage of the recent events in the South, there has been amazingly little mention of the momentous success of non-violence as a political means. How and why is it working? One reason for the silence, no doubt, is that reporters and their readers tend to look for, and wait for, "dramatic" violent incidents—the police dogs got much more notice than the fortitude of the children. Perhaps another reason is that successful non-violence does not fit easily with American political thinking; maybe people don't *want* to mention it. The fact remains that a major social change is occurring, with repercussions in the power structure and the economy, yet with not many wounded and less than half a dozen killed (counting in a murder or two that "has no connection"). We are witnessing a novelty in democratic history. Especially in pacifists it awakens the hope that the example may have consequences in America and in the world far beyond the field of race relations itself.

In discussions of non-violence—except when they are narrowly moral or religious—much is said, usually discouragingly, about the peculiar group characters and the peculiar circumstances that are necessary. It is always pointed out that just the Indians succeeded with just the British, but nobody could have succeeded with the Germans (not that anybody tried). Certainly success does depend on the character of the opponent and on the nature of one's own commitment. What can we now gather, from the Southern reports, about our peculiar American situation? I am drawing the following reflections from the observations of Dave Dellinger of *Liberation* magazine during a recent stay in Birmingham.

(1) Very important is that in a situation of powerless frustration, non-violent action at least gives something to do that is simple and guiltless. In a highly organized economic and social structure, where political action is indirect, and legal remedy is necessarily elaborate and slow, people suffer from a creeping paralysis. But now one can strike, boycott, picket, protest en masse, pray and sing en masse, sit in, go limp, be hauled off to jail. None of this requires much money; propaganda is mainly by word of mouth and live meetings; the skills are easily taught—though they require courage and conviction; and organization has proved to be surprisingly uncomplicated and flexible. The general American feeling is, "In such a vast system, what can one man do without connections, money, political party?" Here, demonstrably, *many* can have an effect, with rather rudimentary organization. People revive with activity, and one action leads to another.

(2) A striking feature of the Southern protest—as contrasted, for example, with the Gandhian movement—is that the Negroes and their white friends do not regard themselves as flouting the Law; rather, the laws are "unjust." In the sit-downs in terminals, disobeying the police is not regarded as Civil Disobedience or "conscientious objection," but rather as affirming one's rights. Partly, of course, this is because the federal law is different from the state law (and has more troops behind it); but it is also because at a certain point of foolishness and unfairness, law as such loses its moral authority. (This was evident after the Dred Scott decision or during Prohibition.) When the disobedient feel that they are "right," the problems of disobedience cease to be internal and become physical and technical: how not to be swept away by the hoses, how not to drown or get your head broken. This is, of course, a kind of anarchy. In my opinion it is salutary in our extraordinarily supine police-ridden society.

(3) There has been good solidarity. An incident occurs—e.g., police persecution—and at once a small crowd gathers and threatens quickly to become a big crowd. Naturally, any concerted action involving deep need and the danger (and embarrassment) of public exposure creates the sense of solidarity and tends to grow by feeding on itself. In the South—as with labor action in the 30's but unlike pacifist protest so far—this process of accretion has continued, perhaps because the provocations are omnipresent and obvious. There is no need for imagination or persuasion. Also, the very fact of being in a ghetto, which is demoralizing and ordinarily leads to self-contempt and mutual contempt, becomes the ground of loyalty and rallying when there is a ray of hope. The organized leadership has had the usual bickering, based on jealousies and real differences of opinion, but the solidarity of the people has been unbroken and has forced the leaders to cooperate.

(4) There has been an interesting dialectic between the local actions and the national and regional organizations. Repeatedly the segregationists charge that all the trouble is caused by outside agitators, but the charge doesn't stick, and new national organ-

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izations keep springing up that are even more radical than the ones already in existence. When Dr. King says, typically, "Our local affiliate in Birmingham invited us to be on call to engage in a non-violent direct action program if such were deemed necessary" ("Letter to Eight Alabama Clergymen"), his statement is entirely convincing. It is convincing because everywhere, at a grassroots level, all the Negroes and a great majority of the whites believe that it is high time for such a direct action—at least in Alabama!—so there is nothing surprising if the Negroes of Birmingham think so. Here is a curious inversion of the usual relation of "masses" and "leadership." The ideology of the protests, the story of the injustice protested, does not have to be taught; it has been endemic in every community for generations; there are millions of orators. Except for the Black Muslims—who are opposed to the integration movement anyway—leadership has added nothing to the ideology of the movement. What leadership —like the students around James Farmer who became CORE—has done, however, has been to give examples of direct action and these have grown gradually into the tactics of a general guerrilla war. The tactics have been taught. But tactics are precisely what one would expect to come "from below"—as, for example, the CIO ideology of vertical unionism came from above—yet brilliant tactics like staying-in and playing basketball rather than leaving the plant were probably spontaneous and local. As Dave Dellinger points out, very few Negroes have ever heard of Gandhi, yet Montgomery and Birmingham were directly Gandhian nevertheless.

So FAR I have been talking largely about sociological matters. Let me turn to ethical and spiritual matters, which have been, in my opinion, even more essential for the success of non-violent protest.

(5) First of all, non-violence is succeeding—is remaining non-violent—because by and large the segregationists themselves *know* that they are in the wrong, whatever they may animally or psychotically feel. The Declaration of Independence, Christianity, Ethics, the Court, all declare against them. They cannot help but recognize that the protesters have a human claim. This makes it impossible simply to mow the protesters down. Paranoiac individuals or an inflamed mob might become violent, but such violence does not carry over. Indeed, the most that the segregationists seem to be *saying* at present is, "Yes, but not now—not by compulsion." Also a big proportion of the Southern whites—I have heard it estimated at 35 per cent—is against segregation. And it is evident that the great majority of the youth in the colleges are either integrationist or have no strong feelings—they are interested in getting their degrees and going on to prestige graduate schools without undue embarrassment. In any case, there have been unmistakable signs of ambivalence, divided self, among the white authorities. Mighty threats of reprisal have come to nothing; orders have been given and not executed; respectable churches have begun to remember their universalism.

Underlying this change of heart, of course, are changed objective conditions: the growth of overwhelmingly national communications and economy, national military conscription, national labor unions following Northern industry South, and national politicians relying heavily on Northern urban votes. Not least, the world-wide breakdown of colonialism has made segregation embarrassing in the cold war.

(6) Again, as in India, religion has been a powerful help to the Southern Negroes, enabling them to transcend self and fear, and to meet with fortitude the risks of unresisting martyrdom. The Negro meetings, as described, are often revivalist and (spiritually) intoxicating. On the march and standing, praying and hymn-singing are things to do. The Christian rhetoric of the leaders seems to be somewhat authentic. Among these simpler rural or recently rural folk, Christianity seems to retain some of its essence, its millenarianism, its Kingdom Come.

(7) Finally, there have been the unique factors of family and children which have gone little noticed. The warm, close-knit community of Southern Negro families, dedicated to the children and imbued with religion, becomes a good source of strength and endurance for a difficult non-violent war, once Uncle Tom has been transcended. (The fragmented and more chaotic families of New York and Chicago promise much more hostility and spite.) Those who have criticized the exposure of the children in Birmingham quite miss the point. In my opinion, *the entire movement is for the children*—and all the evidence is that the children took part enthusiastically. Let us notice that in Northern cities and suburbs also, mass non-violent action has been directed mostly at the issue of the elementary schools. There have been a few mass protests for fair labor practice, but protesting will not produce jobs for the uneducated; it is the thought that the schools are inferior that causes passion. (To give an analogy, the only pacifist protest with mass appeal has been against poisoning the milk with fallout from the testing.) In Dr. King's usual sermon, surely the telling passage is: "When you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she can't go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, etc." And the seminal Supreme Court decision was, of course, to give the kids a better break by integrating the schools.

Probably it is only by an idea of the future that one can maintain the vigor and discipline necessary for revolutionary non-violence, or indeed for revolution of any kind. People get used to long-standing present oppression; if it worsens, they lash out in anger and vengeance, and they riot. But the future

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requires idealism and persistence. In India, Swaraj —Self-Rule—was the future; it was hope. In America, at present, for whites and Negroes both, only the children seem to represent the future. This is what our affluent society has come to, for rich and poor. Among the whites, there is fantastic concern over primary schooling, child psychology, young marriage, suburban environment, as if adult life were not serious. (Ironically, the suburban flight—for the sake of the white children—segregates the Northern schools and now creates problems for the white parents because of the Negro children.) Among the Negroes, the need to secure equal opportunity for the children has suddenly become desperate because with automation and the collapse of sharecropping they are threatened with an even worse future.

Success in non-violence means, fundamentally, not victory or defeat for either side, but that the opposing groups come to share a new future of common mankind. This was certainly Gandhi's conception. Astoundingly, in affluent America—with its one-third still ill-housed, ill-clothed, ill-fed, even though the GNP is now 600 billion per year—the future of mankind seems to be represented by giving opportunity to the children of poor Negroes. They alone seem to be human! Nothing else arouses deep feeling, can fire the pen of intellectual writers, can bring people out on the streets and make the powers-that-be take notice, and even President Kennedy press for some sensible domestic legislation with a modicum of vigor. The liberal press seems to have no other serious social problem to cover.

Looked at frankly, this is a pathetic—and disastrous —situation. Unless we, Negroes and whites, show an equal seriousness for the future about more grown-up and universal problems, there is not going to be any future for these children to inherit. God bless them, they will get an equal education, but it will be a bad one; they will grow up and vote, but it will be for Bobby Kennedy; they will have jobs (or equal unemployment) manning an expanding economy and galloping technology that we cannot cope with as it is; and they will drive cars in cities already choking to death with cars. They will drift like everybody else—in a world whose functional community is kept from developing by an archaic power structure—right into nuclear annihilation.

The hope is that this Gandhian movement of the children of Birmingham, who certainly never heard of Gandhi, will teach them and some other people to take similar democratic action toward other things that make life livable.

PAUL GOODMAN'S *latest book*, The Society I Live in is Mine, *was published this year by Horizon Press. A regular contributor to* COMMENTARY, *Mr. Goodman last appeared in our December 1962 issue with an essay, "The Ineffectuality of Some Intelligent People."*

JUSTICE BLACK AND THE ABSOLUTE

James Grossman

"DUE PROCESS, to use the vernacular," Justice Douglas has said in a formal lecture on the Bill of Rights, "is the wild card that can be put to such use as the judges choose." A little more than a quarter of a century ago they chose, in the name of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment,* to strike down statutes that were intended to help us out of the Depression. One had the sense of an accelerating force out of control by the spring of 1936. On each of three successive Mondays the Supreme Court declared a statute unconstitutional, using for each a different reason and reserving due process for the last, a New York minimum wage law for women drawn with such care to appease the Court that even starvation wages were to be raised only if a reasonable wage level resulted.

Today the use of the due process clause to upset any economic regulation seems impossible. We know the exact moment when the new direction set in. Less than a year after the decision in the New York case a Washington State minimum wage act, much less well-drawn than the one in New York, was upheld. No new judge had considered the problem, no new learning was brought to it; between the two decisions Franklin Roosevelt had been overwhelmingly re-elected and proposed to pack the Court with new judges. It seems an unimportant nicety to point out that the Washington case apparently had already been informally decided before Roosevelt's plan was announced. As the attack continued, the Court by the changed vote of one judge or at the most two ("A switch in time saves nine") found that the power to enact broad welfare legislation existed in Congress as well as the states, and at a well-timed moment in the fight one extremely conservative judge retired. The Court-packing plan was beaten and the independence of the judiciary preserved by surrendering to the assailant.

To fill the vacancy Roosevelt appointed Senator Hugo Black, an outright New Dealer, which to Roosevelt's opponents implied some unfitness to be a judge, as if it were unseemly to uphold the New Deal on the basis of a conviction older and deeper than the newly converted majority's. A more serious question was raised when the nation learned, too late to do anything about it, that Black for a few

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* The relevant passage of the Fourteenth Amendment is the second sentence of Section 1: "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; *nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law;* nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

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years in the 20's had been a member of the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama, a fact well known there but apparently denied in the Senate during the debate on confirmation. A white-robed Klansman among the black-robed judges—a doctored photograph in the newspapers made this newspaper rhetoric vivid and literal—was at the moment an overwhelming national scandal, which seen today in perspective seems irrelevant.

The brief membership, which if timely revealed might have prevented his Supreme Court career, has to be considered in the light not only of that career but also of his earlier career, which he may have been too proud to discuss when he made his unhappy radio address to the nation, for both careers are of a piece. A few years ago Justice Black wrote at length to demonstrate that no crime was committed by one lone Negro's dancing quietly by himself while waiting for a bus and that to convict him of loitering for this and of disorderly conduct for arguing with the policeman who arrested him denied him due process of law. Fifty years ago as a young police court judge in Birmingham, Black in dismissing a disorderly conduct charge against twenty-two Negroes arrested at a dance told the arresting officer that he had no more right to break up their dance than any other. The Supreme Court judge who has so vigorously opposed the lawless enforcement of the law opposed it with equal vigor when he was a county prosecutor in 1915. Negroes arrested and held indefinitely, to increase the fees of their keepers and the costs that prisoners had to pay until they were tried, were either brought to trial quickly by Black or had their cases dismissed. A high percentage of confessions by the Negroes of a certain locality made him suspicious of the police there; on discovering that for a long time they had been using brutal torture he had a grand jury investigate, prepared an eloquent report that led to an independent citizens' committee inquiry and the proposal to oust the guilty policemen. Characteristically, his report insisted that an arrested man, whether innocent or guilty, did not give up his "right to be treated as a human being. . . ."

Joining the Supreme Court while it was in a more or less graceful retreat from its constitutional excesses, Black wanted it in effect to admit clearly and forthwith that it was wrong about the Fourteenth Amendment and had been wrong for decades. Ideally, rate cases brought by utilities claiming that the state had set confiscatory rates should be neither affirmed nor reversed on their merits but dismissed to show that they were not even within the Court's jurisdiction. Corporations, which brought most of the litigation under the Fourteenth Amendment, should be told that a human being was the only kind of "person" whom the Framers of the Amendment had in mind. Black was right in distrusting Roscoe Conkling's plea on behalf of a railroad client in the 1880's that the Framers—he had been one of them—shifted from "citizens" to "person" for the very purpose of using a word broad enough to cover both Negroes and corporations. Conkling fudged his facts; there seems to have been no conscious conspiracy for business such as he implied existed. But scholars have made the point that we should not, as Black does, stop here. The Framers, or some of them, were good enough lawyers to know that "due process" was growing beyond its original meaning to take in on the one hand such spiritual concerns as freedom of speech and on the other such practical ones as business and corporations; and if the Framers could think of corporations as entitled to due process, they could also easily think of them as persons.

Black has never convinced the Court on his tactical point about corporations. (He himself has ignored it in rescuing a newspaper corporation from punishment for an editorial.) But he has apparently established his major point, that due process has nothing to do with state regulation of business. The victory was won in the 40's but has just been restated formally by Black. This past term the Court has sustained a state statute prohibiting the general practice of debt adjustment, the business of taking control of a hard-pressed debtor's funds and trying to settle with his creditors. It might well be deemed a harmful business, subject to abuse; but what Black said in his majority opinion was that the state could act foolishly or wisely, under one economic theory or another, it was no concern of the Court's either to approve or disapprove. Only the most conservative of the judges felt the need to assert that the statute might actually be rational; all the other members of an individualistic court given to the exact expression of their views were silent.

Due process of law, whatever else it covers, has always signified to the Court, just as it does to laymen, procedural safeguards. What they are, the Court has never told us precisely. Those that have been enumerated by it come chiefly from the Bill of Rights. As the Bill of Rights was adopted to bind only the federal government and not the states, the Court in construing the Fourteenth Amendment has felt free to pick and choose among the rights; only fundamental ones—those "implicit in the concept of ordered liberty," essential to "civilized decency," to "fundamental liberty and justice"—have been absorbed into due process. By this method self-incrimination and double jeopardy have apparently not been absorbed, certainly not fully, indictment by grand jury not at all, but unreasonable searches and seizures and right to counsel have been. The First Amendment rights—freedom of religion, press, assembly, petition, although matters of substance rather than of procedure—seem to have been fully carried over into due process.

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No one in our time has so pushed the Court to make the Bill of Rights applicable to the states or to expand the provisions of the Bill of Rights itself as has Hugo Black. His passion for freedom, his faith in it as an everyday guide stand out in Irving Dilliard's excellent collection of Black's opinions on civil rights and liberties.* By arranging them chronologically and including Black's James Madison Lecture as well as his public interview on absolutes at an American Jewish Congress dinner, Mr. Dilliard has enabled us to see Black's philosophy of freedom emerging fully articulated relatively early, and yet having even now the potentiality of startling consequences.

THE MAJORITY of the Court, particularly when influenced by Felix Frankfurter, has been haunted by the possibility that it may now, in the field of civil rights, be imposing its own views of freedom, its very prejudices, on legislatures, as formerly its predecessors imposed theirs in the field of economics. It is a troublesome doubt, for all who judge like to believe that they are governed by objective standards; even literary critics are reluctant to accept Remy de Gourmont's view that it is the function of the critic to erect his prejudices into laws. For a profound student of the Court like Frankfurter, aware of past abuse of judicial power, the only hope is in self-restraint, humility. "Mr. Justice Frankfurter is deeply humilitarian," Professor Wallace Mendelson has observed. "Plainly this is an acquired characteristic. . . ."

For Black, the Frankfurter technique leads not only to uncertainty but to the very vice it purports to cure. No matter how one words the standards judges should apply, the actual method of selecting what is essential to due process is bound to be personal; the greater the judges' self-restraint the more they are legislating and in the end nullifying the Bill of Rights. It is implicit in Black's logic that all of the provisions of the Bill must be treated as part of due process, and he believes that what logic demands history has happily performed: the entire Bill of Rights was incorporated (presumably through the privileges and immunities clause) into the Fourteenth Amendment by its Framers.

In an elaborate appendix to a 1947 dissenting opinion, Black made what may well be the fullest investigation into the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment that has been made by a Supreme Court judge, for judges usually do not look so much to history as to what their predecessors have said is history. He found that Congressman Bingham, whom Black likes to call the Madison of the first section of the Fourteenth Amendment, mentioned the Bill of Rights frequently in debate, and that Howard of Michigan in introducing the Amendment in the Senate clearly stated that it protected the personal rights set forth in the first eight Amendments. These views of a proponent are entitled, it seems to me, to a greater weight than is usually accorded them, and yet as Frankfurter said, "What was submitted for ratification was his proposal not his speech." The proposal was so unclear that state legislatures do not seem to have been aware that it was being made; nearly half of the ratifying states were then instituting criminal prosecutions without a grand jury and never changed so as to conform to this requirement of the Bill of Rights. Most of the public discussion of the Fourteenth Amendment was about its major purpose, the protection of Negroes and the reconstruction of the South. In this clamor little else could be heard. If Black is right, it can almost be said that the Fourteenth Amendment was adopted by a conspiracy—one, however, not on behalf of corporate power but of the Bill of Rights.

Black's doctrine of wholesale incorporation has not been accepted by the Court, but I believe that it has influenced decisions. There seems to be a recent tendency to apply all of the features of a right enumerated in the Bill in their full rigor against a state when the right is found to be part of due process. We saw how absolute a prohibition can be when Black demonstrated that New York's experiment with a vaguely deistic prayer of less than two dozen words was an establishment of officially approved religious doctrine forbidden by the First Amendment.

Professor Edmond Cahn in his public interview of Black used as a text the sentence from the James Madison Lecture that might be taken as the judge's credo: "It is my belief that there *are* 'absolutes' in our Bill of Rights, and that they were put there on purpose by men who knew what words meant and meant their prohibitions to be 'absolutes.' " We can agree with Black's characteristic argument from history in every field except the one that is most important, freedom of the press.

An excellent case has been made by a liberal scholar that the Framers' bold words on freedom of the press when the First Amendment was adopted meant much less to them then than they do to us now.† That freedom was placed beyond the reach of the government; Congress, unlike the Parliament in England, could not abridge it in the slightest. But what was given this absolute protection was a relatively narrow freedom, the right to publish without previous restraint or licensing such as had prevailed in England until 1694; one would still be subject to prosecution for seditious libel, as fairly moderate disparagement of the government was called. The most that the Framers seem to have had in mind was the

* *One Man's Stand for Freedom: Mr. Justice Black and the Bill of Rights,* Knopf, 504 pp., $6.95.

† *Legacy of Suppression: Freedom of Speech and Press in Early American History,* by Leonard W. Levy, Belknap Press, 353 pp., $6.50.

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right to plead truth as a defense and to have it passed on by a jury. It was only when Madison and Jefferson and their allies were fighting the Sedition Act aimed against their party that they first urged that a broader definition of freedom was embodied in the First Amendment. They may not have been absolutely and impartially committed to this new contention, for in Jefferson's administration some men were indicted for a seditious libel on him and his Congress, and the indictment was pending in Madison's administration until dismissed by the Supreme Court, not as an invasion of freedom of the press but because there could only be statutory and not common law federal crimes.

Jefferson's and Madison's more liberal views have prevailed to such an extent that we are likely to think that their own dabbling in seditious libel was not in good faith. We should realize rather that they and their allies in the course of their political struggles enlarged constitutional freedom. What Professor Levy has said so well of them has some application to Justice Black today. "They were addressing the future, not the past. Their insistence that they were simply clarifying the past's original understanding reflected an Anglo-American habit of going forward while facing backwards: rights that should exist are established on the fictitious pretense that they have ever existed. . . ." It is a noble fiction that when sincerely believed can help create for the future the Golden Age it sees in the past. But it is a future that has not yet come into being.

The views which Black holds with such intensity he seems to have enjoyed stating in his New York interview with provocative simplicity, as if he were speaking off the cuff rather than from his depth of historical learning. But the very casualness with which he asserts his claims for the absolute can jolt us into realizing that we have been accepting, merely because they are old, restrictions on freedom that are inconsistent with it. His most startling, most shocking, theory is the unconstitutionality of our libel law. That Congress has enacted no law on private libel in its entire existence may well be a sign that, as early commentators thought, it cannot under the First Amendment. What is forbidden Congress seems equally to be forbidden the states (even if we think of only the First Amendment and not the entire Bill of Rights as being made applicable to the states by the Fourteenth). This is in essence Black's point. But if we infer nothing from the inaction of Congress and if we assume, as I believe we must, that freedom is less than absolute, still many of the peculiar features of present libel law must go if freedom of the press is to have any real meaning.

Freedom, we like to say, does not give one the right to harm others by lying about them. But the law of libel—which derives largely from Star Chamber, that part of the English tradition least compatible with freedom—in a number of ways goes much farther than to give compensation for actual damage from lies:

(1) The plaintiff does not have to prove that what has been written about him is false. Instead, the burden of proving truth is on the defendant and he is limited to the use of legally acceptable evidence, which often means that he must produce in court the eyewitnesses to the events he has written about. It is not enough for him to show that he has acted with the greatest care and has used only reliable sources; he will still be liable, for this is one field of law in which there can be liability without fault in anyone, unless we accept the Star Chamber view that unlicensed writing is itself a fault.

(2) Punitive damages, a frankly penal sum in excess of actual damage, can be awarded if the defendant acted maliciously, which may mean no more than that in a jury's opinion he did. So much of the ancient hostility to the press survives in our libel law that if a defendant pleads the defense of truth and fails to establish it, his failure is a circumstance from which the jury may infer malice. Punitive damages paid to the plaintiff are possibly an even more oppressive form of punishment than a fine paid to the state would be. They are a criminal sanction imposed without the traditional safeguards of the criminal law. The jury in many states need not be unanimous in its verdict, nor need it find the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

(3) Even a verdict nominally limited to plaintiff's actual damages can in reality include a penal amount. For the plaintiff need not offer any evidence of the damage he has suffered; the jury can infer the amount from the circumstances of the case.

The judge-made rule of judicial impunity recognizes the deterrent effect of libel suits. If what a judge says or writes in a case is relevant, it can be false, scurrilous, malicious, but the judge cannot be held liable. Surely the basis for this rule is not that judges demand the right to defame, but that they need this absolute freedom of speech if they are to speak freely.

A wholesome dread of the law's uncertainties, a wholesome ignorance of how really illiberal the law of libel is, perhaps explain why more damage to freedom has not been done by it. The huge verdicts of the last few years give to the law a new potential for harm, particularly in areas in which a pattern of repetition may be established. A scandal sheet, living by defamation, changing its victims constantly, presumably can pay the cost. A Northern newspaper or magazine circulating in the South may find it prohibitively expensive to publish the truth as it sees it or to advertise the political views of others if Southern juries are to continue to bring in half-million dollar verdicts. In a normal world a balance of rights—an approach that Black despises—would suggest that where a subject of public importance is

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involved a plaintiff should recover in a libel suit only if he proves that the statement about him was false and the defendant careless or otherwise at fault, and his recovery should be limited to the actual damages established by competent evidence. If abnormal verdicts persist, the temptation may become strong to find that the First Amendment has to be read as literally as Black says it should be.*

BLACK SPEAKS in terms of absolutes, but when we compare the actual issues in a case with Black's opinion—Irving Dilliard's valuable prefatory notes and his skillful editing of the opinions make it easy for us to do this—we are struck by how much stronger the doctrine often is than the occasion actually demands. If freedom wins, he writes to assure it the largest victory. If he is in dissent but also at times when he concurs, the wrong to freedom reminds him of the grossest ancient wrongs—the anti-Masonic madness of the 1830's, the Alien and Sedition laws, Protestant persecution of Catholics, Catholic attainder of Protestants (Black follows Macaulay in his views of the wickedness of James II's brief ascendancy in Ireland, not Lecky, who finds Macaulay's picturesque, horrifying details exaggerations). In the long run Black's method may well be fruitful, but in a given case it sometimes seems weak. He seems to see no difference between the folly of discharging a subway conductor for refusing to state whether he is a Communist and the Taft-Hartley Act requirement that a union official swear that he is not one. (Even so good a friend of free speech as Zechariah Chafee has said, "The Taft-Hartley oath was intended to remedy serious evils of industrial relations, such as strikes for political or revolutionary purposes.")

Since Black's fundamental tactic has been to get us to accept as old what are really new views, he does not speak of the growth of the law and does not admit that he has any part in making it, as judges who have been teachers are so fond of doing. At the most he admits to helping restore the law to its original purpose. Mere reason may tell us that this is an absurd doctrinaire attitude, but it has been amazingly successful as a judicial method, and the vulgar test of success is not a bad one to apply in a field that has so few demonstrable rules as constitutional law.

Black's method is successful because if one is to explicate a text well, one must have faith in the task, in the value of the text itself. It is perhaps no more absurd for Black to look for ultimate wisdom in an 18th-century document, the creation of an anxious period that had its own problems to solve, than it is for us to find profound insights about ourselves in the plays Shakespeare threw together hastily. It is part of our romantic heritage that we have more faith in poets as lawmakers than in lawmakers as poets. To say, as we do, that the Constitution is what the judges say it is may not so much deny its existence as assert that as Shakespeare has been enriched by Coleridge and his other great critics, so it has been enriched by its interpreters. If in our few best moments we are able to read Shakespeare as if he were a sacred text, finding among the ambiguities of poetry some of our few certainties about life, it should be possible for us to believe that a judge can read the Constitution, his sacred text, as if it were Shakespeare and find in it his vision of the absolute.

It is certainly not a dangerous vision today. So many forces in the courts, in government and society, so much of what we call moderation and prudence and the art of the possible, so much even of liberalism itself, make against freedom that no force on its side can be extreme. Hugo Black's stand through the years for absolute freedom may help assure us an indispensable minimum.

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* I do not pretend to write impartially on libel, for as a lawyer I have been concerned with it chiefly from the point of view of publishers and authors.

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The Vanishing Jews

MILTON HIMMELFARB

Seed as the Sand of the Sea?

Some years ago a book called *The Vanishing Irish* worried about the future of Ireland, but since then the Irish have stopped vanishing. The Jews have not stopped. Erich Rosenthal has told us that our birth rate is so low that the number of Jews in the United States is bound to decrease. Now to the news of loss by infertility he adds the news of loss by intermarriage. The volume of the *American Jewish Year Book* about to appear features a study by him showing that the rate of Jewish intermarriage is higher than has been generally assumed, and is rising.

Jewish intermarriage, precisely defined, refers to one of two things: a wedding in which either the bridegroom or the bride is not a Jew at the time of the ceremony, or a couple in which either the husband or the wife is not a Jew at the time of the inquiry or census. (If the husband or the wife is a convert to the other's religion, it is not an intermarriage.) Only about 30 per cent of the children in Jewish intermarriages are raised as Jews or are considered to be Jews by their parents.

Professor Rosenthal's data suggest that intermarried Jewish wives are more likely than Jewish husbands to disappear as Jews, probably without the formality of conversion to Christianity, and their children more likely than the children of Jewish men not to be considered as Jews. Since intermarriage is more normal, so to speak, for Jewish men than for Jewish women, it may be that when it is the woman who intermarries she has decided somewhat more firmly to cut her Jewish ties.

Both traditional rabbinical law and contemporary rabbinical policy are inadequate to these realities. Rabbinical law declares as a Jew the child of a Jewish mother. The reason for that principle of the *halakhah* is not so much that maternity is certain while paternity is putative—it's a wise child, etc.—as the biblical finding of fact that the child takes his religion and culture from his mother. The Bible prohibits marriage with both the men and the women of the Israelites' neighbors, but in the narratives it is the women who are especially to be feared. (In Ezra-Nehemiah the Judaeans' gentile wives are said to raise their children as idolators, and are banished.) But in the United States today, the odds are that a child born of intermarriage who is brought up as a Jew has a Jewish father.

As to the policy of the American rabbinate, it is less a policy than habits and reflexes. The rabbis, more than anyone else, are worried about our survival, but they seem to prefer not to know that we are failing to reproduce ourselves. When they do turn their attention to Jewish fertility, it is to invoke the support of Jewish tradition or law for birth control. There are famous Reform and Conservative responsa of that kind, and recently a well-known rabbi felt it necessary to say the same thing again—as if we needed the encouragement. Some years before Hitler came to power, the doom of the German Jews had already been pronounced. Their birth rate was so low by the 1920's, the ratio of old to young so high, and intermarriage so common, that only an impossible average of 7 children in every German Jewish family could reverse the trend to extinction. We are more fortunate. To pass from minus to plus all we need is to raise the number of children in the average Jewish family to something like 2.5 or 3—not a great rise, but a rise nevertheless. If the rabbis wanted us to have more children, would they make a point of telling us that Jewish law favors birth control? They must imagine that we are unrestrained breeders.

It is on intermarriage that the rabbis center nearly all their concern for the Jewish future. Coolidge's preacher was against sin, and they are against intermarriage. But clearly, fewer Jews are listening. What the rabbis say against intermarriage might be more compelling if what they say and do not say about a closely allied question, conversion to Judaism, were less puzzling. Most of them are unenthusiastic about conversion. They believe that it is untraditional, that the would-be convert is probably a disturbed personality, or that before trying to convert others to Judaism we should convert the Jews.

The argument from tradition is that since the Roman Empire of Constantine and his successors made converting Christians to Judaism a capital crime, it has been un-Jewish to proselytize. Though the *Neture Karta* are not popular with most of us, our reasoning about conversion is like their reason-

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ing about Israel. They and other ultra-ultra-Orthodox Jews oppose the State of Israel as rebelliousness against God. When He decides to restore the Jews, they say, He will have no need of presumptuous mortals; He will send His Messiah. We end the *'Alenu* doxology (which Solomon Schechter called the Jewish *Marseillaise*) with the great verse from Zechariah: "And the LORD shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall the LORD be one and His name one"; but to try to bring that day a little nearer would apparently be un-Jewish.

The appeal to tradition and history has other peculiarities. For one thing, according to Blumenkranz's *Juifs et chrétiens* . . . the Jews in Christian lands proselytized as hard as they could, law or no law, until the disaster of the crusades. But whether our ancestors stopped proselytizing in the 4th or the 12th century, when their oppressors forbade it, they had to enforce the edict with the death penalty. Now it is we who do the forbidding in the name of fidelity to tradition.

The second argument, the alleged maladjustment of would-be converts, is an excuse for inertia. Almost by definition, a convert to any religion is likely to be maladjusted; but few religions refuse converts. Besides, maladjustment does not inhere in the genes, and the children of a convert can be as adjusted as anyone else. And anyway, the facts are in dispute. A rabbi with some experience of intermarriage and of conversion to and from Judaism tells me that if he were to generalize, he would judge our imports to be better than our exports—and, perhaps, than the average of our domestic market, too.

The third argument, priority for the home mission over the foreign mission, is another excuse for doing nothing. Are the resources withheld from the foreign field being used for a Jewish mission to the Jews? And it is untrue that the foreign mission weakens the home mission, because there is nothing like success abroad for arousing enthusiasm at home. The Anglican John Henry Newman's reception into the Roman Catholic Church not only began a series of conversions to Catholicism that has not yet ended, it also strengthened the morale and devotion of Catholics by birth. Testimony, and above all the testimony of a life, rightly has much force. A few years ago a friend, a university teacher with notable gifts of learning and personality, was a "supply" rabbi in my congregation on Rosh Ha-shanah and Yom Kippur. Before *Ne'ilah* a woman told me how impressed she had been: "I said to myself, if someone as intelligent and scholarly as he is can be so sincere about it, then we must have a pretty good old religion after all." If he had been a congregational rabbi his testimony would have been discounted. (What else should a rabbi be if not a sincere Jew?) If he had been a convert she would have been even more impressed.

In the face of a rise in intermarriage rabbis keep using arguments that clearly have been ineffective and may actually be offensive. When they warn against intermarriage, they might think of doing it in a way that will allow them to continue in some such fashion as this: "It is best not to intermarry, but probably some of you will. If you do, try to persuade your fiancé(e) to become a Jew. Why withhold our tradition and religion from someone you want to marry?" If aggressive proselytism really is un-Jewish, that would not be very aggressive.

Even with the rabbis passive, there is a fair amount of conversion to Judaism in the United States, nearly all of it before marriage. Whereas in Europe conversions to Judaism seem to have been rare enough to become anecdotes, here they are common enough to make a statistical difference. In the past ten years alone we have probably received as many converts as there are Jews in Minneapolis or Cincinnati. With some rabbinical initiative, conversion might offset our losses by intermarriage, or actually produce a gain. And once we try it for demographic reasons we may find that we like it for its own sake.

The Spirit Giveth Life?

By now Catholics and non-Catholics have been heard on Dr. John Rock's *The Time Has Come.** Most non-Catholics think it wonderful that a Catholic doctor should advocate fertility control (in the form of The Pill). Most Catholics think that Dr. Rock is not really a Catholic doctor, he is a doctor who is a Catholic.

That is what we hear in public. Privately, the non-Catholic response is apt to be condescension and amusement: so there are, after all, enlightened spirits in Catholicism, and so a Catholic can, if he is brave enough, say things that will annoy the bishops and the Knights of Columbus; but how funny it is that someone should need so much courage and subtlety to plead for what everybody has long since known and does as a matter of course.

If Jews are among the condescending and the amused, it is because they have lost a feeling for their own tradition. One can smile at Dr. Rock's exertions only if one does not take religious law seriously. Many Jewish religious liberals claim Maimonides as a rationalist ancestor, but he was not at all a liberal in their sense. For Maimonides a religion without law was not a real religion. He respected Islam, partly because it had law, but not Christianity, partly because he thought it had none. In the debate over birth control between Christians, or more generally between religious conservatives and liberals, Maimonides would probably have preferred the Catholic and conservative position—not only as at least pointing to some idea of law, but also because he held Judaism to be ascetic in such things.

It would not be hard to compile an anthology of sarcasm about legalism, as the opponents of re-

* Knopf, 203 pp., $3.95.

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ligious law like to call it. Heine ridiculed the Rabbis' problem of the egg laid on the Sabbath and Dean Inge ridiculed the Catholic rules for fasting on Friday, which prohibit meat, however lean, but permit lobster in a rich sauce. The point was that that sort of thing has nothing to do with spirituality. Is it to be supposed that God cares about eggs and meat? Human law is arbitrary: steal x dollars and it is petty larceny, steal $x+1$ dollars and it is grand larceny; if you were born in this place you are a citizen of the United States, if you were born a few feet to the north you are a Canadian. Differences like these, which have nothing to do with the service of the heart, only prove man's limitedness and failure to love. If God intended the marital relation to be exclusively or even primarily for begetting children, then the Catholic distinction between licit and illicit ways of preventing conception is blasphemous nonsense. Since that is not His intention, the Catholic hair-splitting is doubly nonsensical.

In a way, Catholics refute anti-legalist criticism as in Paul's day Jews must have refuted his condemnation of the Law. They deny that there is a conflict between law and spirituality and insist that the opposite of law is not spirituality but lawlessness. (Linguistically, anti-legalism is antinomianism.) Dividing lines, as Burke said, are arbitrary, but though no man can say exactly when day becomes night, day is different from night. And so it is with religious law, which after all is for men, not angels. If men are to abstain from work on the Sabbath or from enjoying its fruits, they must know what work is and what it is not; and if they are to fast, they must know what is reconcilable with fasting and what is not. Heine and Inge were really attacking abstention from work on the Sabbath and fasting, not the quibbles of legalism.

Jews can therefore understand Dr. Rock's difficulty, and the Catholics' difficulty, with ironical sympathy. After Paul preached the abolition of the Law to the Corinthians, some of them understood him to mean the abolition of the law against sexual looseness. There must have been Corinthians who saw Paul's outrage about their goings-on as proof that he was soft on legalism. Simultaneously to reject legalism and uphold law is easier in theory than in practice.

Catholic theology, like Christian theology generally, has never tired of contrasting good, Christian spirituality with bad, Jewish legalism. In the debate over birth control, it is the Catholics who are cast as legalist, and their critics—including many Jews—as spiritual. Now the Catholics know how it feels. Much of the attack on their so-called legalism invokes high principle to justify actions and desires that are understandable enough, but not so exalted as all that. The critics of Catholic teaching on birth control rarely say what everyone knows—that one reason for limiting the size of our families is to have a good time. Or if that is hinted at, it is in the cant of self-fulfillment—our duty not to allow the creative development of our personalities and capacities to be frustrated by too many children. Following the easy path is thus twice blessed: it is fun, and it lets us take a high moral tone toward the foolish and improvident who follow the hard path.

In the modern history of Judaism we find something similar. Years ago the scholar Louis Ginzberg observed that Reform Judaism criticized Orthodoxy for insisting on onerous external commandments while neglecting true inwardness; yet in Lithuania he had known many saintly Orthodox Jews and in the West few saintly Reform Jews, though Reform had rid itself of the burden of commandments. From the beginning Reform Judaism has had to worry about the consequences of its anti-legalism. Reform, which thought of itself as prophetic, understood in the 19th-century manner the Prophets' opposition to cult and institution more literally than most scholars today believe the Prophets meant to be taken. But if cult and institution count for little, why go to the synagogue? So Reform rabbis find their people applying the anti-legalist ideology to the Reform synagogue itself, and have to admonish them in terms like these: "Don't go on a picnic when you should be in the synagogue. You say that you can pray in the country. You can, but you know you won't." Which has not made picnics less popular.

The traditional Jewish case for law is stronger, or at any rate more persuasive, than the Catholic. The rabbis never imposed on the community obligations which they themselves were exempt from. The hasidic masters, though saints and mystics, were also, like their followers, husbands and fathers. In the Catholic Church, on the other hand, the clergy which teaches that the law forbids birth control, or birth control by effective means, is celibate. Justice is not manifestly seen to be done, and there is room for doubt—does the rigor of Catholic law owe something to the celibate's envy, conscious or unconscious, of the married?

Here again the Church's predicament is ultimately due to Paul. He said that the celibate can do God's work more freely than the married. So Catholic priests do not marry. But he said that celibacy was no problem for him. Granted that that was true of Paul, of how many others can it be true? If priests married, they would have to practice what they preached.

As outsiders see it, Dr. Rock's difficulties are artificial. He is trying to untie a Gordian knot, and that is unnecessarily hard: a Gordian knot should be cut. Still, if not theologically or practically, then at least aesthetically his effort must be admired—precisely because we think his task unnecessarily hard.

Oui, l'œuvre sort plus belle
D'une forme au travail
Rebelle. . . .

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

THE NEW NEGRO RADICALISM*

Staughton Lynd

ALONGSIDE THE mass marches, the Freedom Walks, the continuing heroism of voter registration in the rural Deep South, a new radicalism is taking form among the young second-level leadership of the integration movement. Civil rights activists made up the core of those who picketed against the President's Cuba policy in downtown Atlanta last October. The autobiographies of African socialists Nkrumah and Kenyatta are widely read. If one dates "the movement" from the Supreme Court desegregation decision of 1954 or from the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955–1956, it is almost a decade old; there has been time for the emergence of a group of young veterans who, disillusioned with the fruits of so much sweat and tears, are groping for something more. Increasingly, the antagonist is identified as "the power structure" of the South or, sometimes, the nation. As the theme of 1961–1962 was a new emphasis on politics and voter registration, so in 1962–1963 every major civil rights group has begun to confront the problem of poverty. There is even talk of an alliance between Negroes and poor whites: the old dream of Reconstruction and Populism and the New Deal.

Four new books can help us assess, tentatively, the content and direction of the new ideology.

Strength To Love, a collection of sermons, is Martin Luther King, Jr.'s second book. It is best approached, not as an intellectual discourse, but as a spiritual handbook for Christians seeking to overcome hate and (as importantly) fear and despair. Dr. King's prose, like the President's, is often encumbered by clichés. The substance of the book is deeply personal, however. Three of the sermons were written in Georgia prisons, and Dr. King's conviction that "our God is able" has come to him *in extremis.* Here he tells again, as he did in *Stride Toward Freedom,* of the night in Montgomery when, after one too many threatening phone calls, he went down to the dark kitchen and told his God that his own powers were at an end. He tells also of renewing his faith from the faith of his followers, as when an old lady of the congregation assured him they were with him all the way, then added: "But even if we ain't with you, God's gonna take care of you."

Dr. King's concern in these sermons reaches out beyond the Negro's struggle to the other great social ills of war and economic exploitation. Thus he writes:

> What more pathetically reveals the irrelevancy of the church in present-day world affairs than its witness regarding war? In a world gone mad with arms buildups, chauvinistic passions, and imperialistic exploitation, the church has either endorsed these activities or remained appallingly silent. During the last two world wars, national churches even functioned as the ready lackeys of the state, sprinkling holy water upon the battleships and joining the mighty armies in singing, "Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition."

And King says of the American economic system: "Our unswerving devotion to monopolistic capitalism makes us more concerned about the economic security of the captains of industry than for the laboring men whose sweat and skills keep industry functioning." When one recalls that American Negroes have made their greatest advances during time of war, that the present cold war has undoubtedly given the Negro leverage in demanding domestic reform, and that above all things the Negro has sought to avoid association with Communism, Dr. King's willingness to appear "un-American" on these issues seems an important indication of the growing Negro radicalism. In a sermon on "A Certain Rich Man," King's Christianity, his advocacy of the Negro, and his wider commitment to social justice are joined in a passionate synthesis:

> Our nation's productive machinery constantly brings forth such an abundance of food that we must build larger barns and spend more than a million dollars daily to store our surplus. Year after year we ask, "What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?" I have seen an answer in the faces of millions of poverty-stricken men and women in Asia, Africa, and South America. I have seen an answer in the appalling poverty in the Mississippi Delta and the tragic insecurity of the unemployed in large industrial cities of the North. What can we do? The answer is simple: feed the poor, clothe the naked, and heal the sick. Where can we store our goods? Again the answer is simple: We can store our surplus food free of charge in the shriveled stomachs of the millions of God's children

* Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love,* Harper & Row, 146 pp., $3.50; Daniel C. Thompson, *The Negro Leadership Class,* Prentice-Hall, 174 pp., $1.95; Harold R. Isaacs, *The New World of Negro Americans,* John Day, 366 pp., $7.50; Richard Wright, *Lawd Today,* Walker, 189 pp., $3.50.

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who go to bed hungry at night.

The crux of *Strength To Love*, however, is Dr. King's more familiar teaching of non-violence. The enemy can be loved because he knows not what he does: "The whole system of slavery was largely perpetuated by sincere though spiritually ignorant persons." The enemy must be loved because the Negro's task is to create a "blessed community" which will lift the burden of segregation from black *and* white. This theme culminates in Dr. King's famous exhortation at Albany, Georgia:

> To our most bitter opponents we say: "We shall match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering. We shall meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will, and we shall continue to love you. We cannot in all goodness obey your unjust laws, because noncooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is co-operation with good. Throw us in jail, and we shall still love you. Bomb our homes and threaten our children, and we shall still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our community at the midnight hour and beat us and leave us half dead, and we shall still love you. But be ye assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. One day we shall win freedom, but not only for ourselves. We shall so appeal to your heart and conscience that we shall win *you* in the process, and our victory will be a double victory."

One source of the new Negro radicalism is the question whether the strategy of wearing the antagonist down by suffering accurately describes what the freedom movement does, or should do. In day-to-day practice the movement looks to Washington as well as to God. In Birmingham, for example, who can doubt that Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference attempted to pressure the federal government into forcing the white power structure of that steel city to make concessions? This is not to say that legal coercion is equivalent to violence, or that persuasion and negotiation cannot be used together with pressure (as they were in Birmingham so successfully). The point, rather, is that in time a movement is likely to weaken itself if it says that it relies on God while in fact relying primarily on coercion. Dr. King's most recent statement of his views, "Letter From Birmingham City Jail," strikes a new note of realism:

> My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and non-violent pressure. History is the long and tragic story of the fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and voluntarily give up their unjust posture; but as Reinhold Niebuhr has reminded us, groups are more immoral than individuals.

The Negro Leadership Class by Daniel Thompson raises some pointed questions about the efficacy of love and persuasion as agents of social change. The author, now teaching sociology at Howard University, carried out the study while at Dillard University in New Orleans. Professor Thompson takes as his hypothesis a conclusion of Floyd Hunter's 1953 book on Atlanta, *Community Power Structure:* "None of the leaders in the Negro community may operate in the same echelons of power as the top leaders in the total community." He then poses the problem: "If New Orleans, like Atlanta, has no Negroes in the power structure, then how do they get things done?"

Thompson's answer seems to be: They get things done through coercion by the federal government. There have been three typical patterns of race relations leadership among New Orleans Negroes. The first type of leader was the Uncle Tom who accepted the segregationist's belief in a bi-racial social system. Such leaders, of course, ceased to be significant after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954. The second type of Negro leader, the "racial diplomat," shares with the white moderate a willingness to put the short-run welfare of the total community ahead of racial progress. This group of leaders is middle-class oriented and operates through negotiation. By the late 1950's they, too, were stepping aside for a third and still more militant leadership group of "race men," who frankly rely on federal intervention.

Professor Thompson is hesitant to evaluate the contribution of the race men, who have so recently come to the fore. He notes that they "have been able to get a few new jobs for Negroes; at least token school desegregation; and the desegregation of public parks, transportation, and some lunch counters." By implication he endorses their approach. For in discussing the achievements of New Orleans Negroes in the three areas which, Thompson says, concern them most—citizenship, earning a living, and education—Thompson in each instance concludes that "left to itself" New Orleans does not have what it takes to accomplish desegregation.

In the economic area all strategies have failed. "Despite the fact that most leaders in New Orleans recognize that Negroes suffer from widespread economic discrimination and that this condition gives rise to many other related social ills affecting Negroes, little concerted effort has been made to alleviate this condition." In fact, "for all practical purposes, Negroes on the whole are relatively no better off in their efforts to earn a living than they were in 1940." What is true in New Orleans is true for American Negroes everywhere. Hence the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee field workers registering voters in southwest Georgia and the Mississippi Delta find themselves compelled to cope with economic oppression as well as political exclusion. They are doing it, thus far, by gallant efforts to truck in food and to organize producers' cooperatives; but the long-run answer, there as in New Orleans, is massive federal intervention.

A weakness in *The Negro Leadership Class* is that too much credit for recent social changes is ascribed to the "well-thought-out programs"

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of leaders. Dr. King is nearer the truth when, in his foreword to Professor Thompson's book, he quotes Gandhi's aphorism: "There go my people, I must catch them, for I am their leader." The Montgomery boycott began with the spontaneous decision of Mrs. Rosa Parks not to go to the back of a bus. The sit-ins were started by four college students without organizational sponsorship. While the Freedom Rides and the mass marches in Albany and Birmingham were somewhat more planned, in each of these crises the impulse of ordinary men and women carried the action far beyond anything first envisioned. The problem in understanding the Negro upsurge remains the problem of explaining the changed spirit of the masses.

HAROLD ISAACS attempts to get at this subtle and still-unfinished spiritual transformation in *The New World of Negro Americans*. Like Thompson, Isaacs gathered material by interviews; however, his sample included not only successful business and professional men, but also students and alienated intellectuals outside the Negro power structure as well as the white. Hence Isaacs was in a position, as Thompson was not, to pick up clues about the leadership which will supplant the currently dominant race men.

Isaacs finds that in the 1950's "Negroes accustomed always to feeling the big winds blowing against them now began to feel the new sensation of having the wind at their backs. Suddenly all the big facts of life and history were working for them and not, as always before, against them." First and foremost cause for this new sense of the world was, of course, the world-wide uprising of dark-skinned peoples. Suddenly we have all come to the realization that it is whites who are the minority.

Martin Luther King also invokes the wind, or as he repeatedly puts it, the tide, of anti-colonialism. For example:

> Twenty-five years ago there were only three independent countries in the whole continent of Africa, but today thirty-two countries are independent. A short fifteen years ago the British Empire politically dominated more than 650,000,000 people in Asia and Africa, but today the number is less than 60,000,000. The Red Sea has opened.

But, to adopt King's metaphor, Pharaoh's army hardly "got drownded" non-violently; and the testimony reported by Isaacs suggests that the impact of overseas independence may undermine the American Negro's traditional Christianity, of which Dr. King's teaching is only the most recent variant (it was, after all, Booker T. Washington who said that no man could push him so low as to make him hate). If hope which casteth out fear can come from Africa and Asia—or from Latin America—will the freedom fighter in America still find it necessary to feel (in the words of "We Shall Overcome," anthem of "the movement") that "God is on our side today"?

IN appraising the American Negro's quest for a new identity, Isaacs first explores the significance of names and colors.

The designation "Negro" has long been resented, Isaacs shows, perhaps especially because of its closeness to "nigger." For a generation after the American Revolution, free Negroes tended to call themselves "Africans" (as in the name of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded in 1796). About 1830 the term "colored" was substituted, partly, Isaacs suggests, because it connoted light skin, and partly as a gesture of protest against the deportation policy of the American Colonization Society. "Afro-American," proposed in 1880, has never found its way into everyday speech. The confusion over names continues, mirroring deeper conflicts; and one might add that the Black Muslims, by putting "X" in place of their inherited "slave-names," aptly express the Negro's problematic position once he rejects the identity America has fashioned for him. The "X" seems to say: "I do not yet know who I am, but I am not what you white folk think I am."

Not just the white folk, but also the Bible, Shakespeare, and even some Afro-Asian myths, uniformly use "black" and "dark" to mean "bad." The result is self-hatred and color caste among Negroes themselves, a phenomenon Isaacs compares to the "identification with the aggressor" which Bruno Bettelheim observed in Nazi concentration camps. Nationalist movements like the Muslims conversely make their appeal to those who are poor *and* dark. One result of the African upsurge, according to Isaacs's informants, is that awareness of shades of darkness is decreasing among American Negroes.

These preliminary considerations lead Isaacs to his central theme: the American Negro and Africa. "For the Africans *were* the blacks, the source of all blackness," the heart of darkness, and so, "the heart of the heart of the matter." Isaacs believes that American Negroes repress their awareness of Africa. It is simply too painful to retain in consciousness that traumatic moment when, bending over the pictures in an elementary-school geography text, the child saw among "the five races of mankind" a regal Caucasian side-by-side with a naked African cannibal.

There is a kind of trauma for the white reader, too, once he enters with Isaacs into the experience of world history as it appeared to many American Negroes growing up in the first half of the 20th century. "Belgium," for example, immediately called to mind the atrocities of King Leopold in the Congo, and so many American Negroes regarded the German invasion of Belgium in World War I as just retribution. Similarly, what made internationalists of many Negroes in the 1930's was not Hitler, nor the Spanish Civil War, but Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia (the more painful because in 1896 Ethiopia had given the white man his only decisive repulse in Africa). Marcus Garvey is barely noticed in American history textbooks written by whites; but when Kwame Nkrumah became head of state in Ghana, he gave to the country's steamship company the name

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which Garvey invented for the boats which were to take American Negroes back to Africa: the Black Star Line. It is as if Negroes, physically living side-by-side with whites, have mentally inhabited another country.

Then follow essays on what Africa has meant to Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, Lorraine Hansberry, and to that great educator of American Negroes on matters African, W. E. B. DuBois; and on the experience of other, less prominent American Negroes who have recently visited Africa or moved there permanently. Isaacs's conclusion is that "in rediscovering their African origins Negroes are not regaining their identity as long-lost Africans but are reshaping their identity as Americans." He rightly stresses the difference between the Negro's freedom struggle in America and the anti-colonialist movement in Africa: there, the white minority can be physically ejected; here, the Negro minority must find a way to live with the white man who will still be present after "victory." Victory for the American Negro cannot eliminate the dialogue of ambivalences within the Negro's mind and soul. Loving and hating Africa, he must continue to encounter white America which he also loves and hates. Isaacs suggests that in the long run a complete physical blending through intermarriage may be the answer.

For the short run, Isaacs believes that the Negro may find an analogue of his future in the achievement of the Jew. "So many thoughtful Negroes," he records, "when asked to project their hopes for Negro status in America 25 years hence, say: 'If all goes for the best, when that time comes, Negroes will stand in American society about where Jews stand now.' " In the last analysis, Isaacs's sensitive discussion comes to rest on the thought that the problem of the American Negro is only another form of the "problem of American pluralism" which so many other minority groups in this country have lived through. Belatedly, but assuredly, the "American effort to create an open society" will assimilate the Negro, too.

This bland conclusion hardly does justice to the anguished questions asked by the young Negro radicals, and asked, too, by the most distinguished American Negro intellectuals: W. E. B. DuBois, Franklin Frazier, James Baldwin. They ask such questions as: Can there ever be an America where men will live together unconscious of color? If structural unemployment in America is here to stay, can the Negro ever expect to enjoy economic equality? Is America a decadent society not worth being integrated into? Isaacs argues that this questioning, at least for the moment, comes only from "a tiny handful" of "radicals" (or as he more often calls them, "pseudo-radicals"), from "disoriented cultists among the poor," and from "tired old men among the fighters for civil rights." He assumes that the young civil rights fighters of the South are a group apart from these alienates, more optimistic and healthier, single-mindedly committed to forcing open the ghetto gates. This is no longer the case. They are increasingly concerned (as DuBois put it to Isaacs) not only with how they are treated on the train of American society, but with where the train is going; they, too, are wondering (as Franklin Frazier, in one of his last public appearances, asked the students of the Atlanta University Center) whether they want to be assimilated into a burning house.

THE MOOD of the emergent Negro radicalism is akin to the mood of the 1930's, and many a young seeker is going beyond Martin King only to go back to Richard Wright. The transition is not so abrupt as one might think. In theory, no two ideologies could be more different than King's Christian non-violence and Wright's angry, poverty-centered atheism. But King in action, as we observed, accepts and uses coercion, and the Wright of *Lawd Today,* written before *Native Son,* had not yet identified the cross of Jesus with the fiery cross of the Klan. Above all, King and Wright are at one in their consciousness of suffering. The dream from which Wright's protagonist, Jake Jackson, awakes, on Lincoln's Birthday in the mid-1930's, is the nightmare to which any Negro spokesman must address himself:

> No matter how hard he squinted his eyes and craned his neck, he could not see the top of the steps. But somebody was calling and he had to go up. He hollered, *Yeah, I'm coming right up, in just a minute!* And then he started. It was hard work, climbing steps like these. He panted and the calves of his legs ached. He stopped and looked to see if he could tell where the steps ended, but there were just steps and steps and steps. *Shucks, they needn't be in such a helluva hurry,* he thought as he stretched his legs and covered three and four steps at a time. Then, suddenly, the steps seemed funny, like a great big round barrel rolling or a long log spinning in water, and he was on top treading for all he was worth and that voice was still calling. He stopped again, disgusted. *Hell, there just ain't no end to these steps.*

In *Lawd Today,* Wright looks for answers not in Marxism but in the collective experience of his people. The novel's finest scene describes four Negroes sorting mail in the Chicago Post Office:

> When they grew tired like this, when most of their workaday preoccupations had been drowned in exhaustion, their basic moods would blend and fuse. They had worked in this manner for so many years that they took one another for granted; their common feelings were a common knowledge. And when they talked it was more like thinking aloud than speaking for purposes of communication. Clusters of emotion, dim accretions of instinct and tradition rose to the surface of their consciousness like dead bodies floating and swollen upon a night sea.

The spirituals had sprung from such a setting of work in common one hundred years earlier. In Depression-ridden Chicago, the experience yields fragments of insight akin to James Baldwin's thesis in *The Fire Next Time:* "These white folks . . . ain't

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never come up against nothing hard yet"; "it's fun to them to see people suffer . . . cause they ain't happy . . . and they take it all out on you."

Like Richard Wright's Jake Jackson, the young radicals today are searching, pulled and repelled by black nationalism, by socialism, by the American dream. Like him, they use the Christian vocabulary to express post-Christian thoughts. Wright says of Jake: "A phrase he had heard an old Negro preacher say down South in his youth welled up in his consciousness, ringing in his ears like a bell. *'Lawd, if I had my way I'd tear this building down.'* "

WRITING JEWISH HISTORY

JEWS, GOD, AND HISTORY. By MAX I. DIMONT. *Simon and Schuster. 463 pp. $7.50.*

Reviewed by ARTHUR HERTZBERG

CHARLES BEARD often warned that historians see what is behind their own eyes. No matter how remote from the present his subject may appear to be, the historian's judgments of men and events—indeed, his choice of what to include in his description of the past and what to leave out as irrelevant—inevitably reflect the mind of a contemporary pamphleteer, moralist, or philosopher. Each age discovers, or even invents, a past to serve its own needs. Even revolutionaries go forth to wreck the world they have inherited in the name of some ancestor.

Beard's insight certainly fits the writers of Jewish history from the very beginning. The historians who are represented in the Bible embroider one point: things go well with a people which obeys God and ill with those who fall away from Him. The great immediate concern of the Biblical age was idolatry, i.e., the attractiveness of the gods of the natives of Canaan to the Hebrew invaders and, later, the lust of the Jewish kingdoms for the gods of their more powerful neighbors. To combat religious treason in the present, the historians in the Bible pointed out its dire results in the past, and predicted even graver consequences in the future.

In the Bible men make war and steal other men's wives, like King David, and women give themselves to gentiles in order to gain personal power and position, like Queen Esther. However, by the first century a great and radical transformation of Jewish existence had reached its final stage with the destruction of the Temple by the Romans. One result was that the Pharisees won out over the other sects in the complicated inner struggles to reconstitute Judaism under the new conditions. In their myth-making, David was transformed from a warrior-bard to a legalistic scholar and Queen Esther was imagined as going through tortuous casuistry, with the aid of Mordecai, to justify her giving herself to Ahasuerus. The Talmud recast the Jewish past as the history of a community dominated from its beginnings by the spirit of a rabbinic theocracy, and this theocracy was, of course, precisely what Johanan ben Zakkai was engaged in creating immediately after the year 70.

Philo and Josephus were writing Jewish history in the same century, but their work was in Greek and it addressed itself to the situation of the Jews in the Hellenistic diaspora. In that environment, Jewish apologists needed to claim that the Jews, though standing apart from the philo-Hellenes, were not therefore barbarians and, at the same time, that their loss of national independence did not prove they were deficient in the warrior virtues. Philo, therefore, reinterpreted the Bible as the greatest of philosophical works, and assured his readers that Moses had been the great teacher of the Greeks. The histories of Josephus reached their most eloquent heights in describing the superhuman heroism of the outnumbered Jews who lost the war with the Romans. Between them, Philo and Josephus created a gallery of philosophers and fighters who would serve as the "ancestors" of a Jewish diaspora which admired such figures, for they were also the heroic types of the dominant culture.

The centuries of the Exile produced very little writing of Jewish history even in the form of implicit revisions that are normally made in the course of writing legal or philosophical works. The basic theory of this period already existed in the Bible and the Talmud—that Exile was punishment for sin and that the Messiah would come when the term of suffering was eventually ended. The Jewish present was therefore a period of patient waiting, and the only response possible was to suffer with unshaken faith. The martyr thus became the central hero. The prayer book for the high holidays contains an account of the lives of various rabbis who rebelled against Rome or resisted its oppression. The tales are told not in the tone of glorying in their resistance but rather of sharing in their horrible tortures and deaths. The early victories of Bar Kochba do not figure in this retelling of the life of Rabbi Akiba, his chief supporter; instead we learn about the minute details of the Rabbi's suffering.

The beginning of the Emancipation, at the dawn of the 19th century, brought a new situation for the Jews, and each of the schools of thought which responded to it again created its own new reading of the past. In our generation a further turn has come with the creation of the State of Israel and the refusal of American Jews to consider themselves to be in Exile. What myths, then, are being evoked to serve these new needs?

In Israel the task is easy, for the way has been prepared by several generations of Zionist theorists. For them Jewish history is the story of the achievement of sovereignty during the Biblical period, followed by its loss, by the many abortive attempts to retrieve it, and finally the regaining of it in the contemporary period. Rebels and fighters like Judas Maccabeus and Bar Kochba are far more important, therefore, than Talmudists like Adret in the 13th century or Caro in the 16th. The centuries of the Exile were creative only insofar as they kept casting up dreams of Zion.

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This nationalistic history is alien to the present Jewish diaspora, which needs a version of the Jewish past that makes of it an heir rather than a betrayer. Generally, the popularizations of such a vision would be expected to follow the work of scholars rather than to precede it. Max Dimont's book is an example of the opposite process, but that is not his fault. Clearly he would feel more at ease before his popular lecture audiences as the apostle of a relevant version of Jewish history by a recognized historian, but such an authority does not exist. Diaspora historians, including the greatest of them all, Salo Baron, see Jewish history as primarily the story of the religious factor, a point of view that does not quite serve the present need. What men like Baron mean by "religious" is clearly not the present religion of the Jews or Jewesses of St. Louis, for such a faith is as demanding as the Zionist imperative to emigrate to Israel, if not more so. Neither the American Jews nor their scholars have yet solved the contemporary problem of self-definition, though some things are clear. The people want to feel that Judaism is now out of the ghetto, that it is very contemporary, intellectual in the middlebrow mode, undemanding, and honorific. Therefore, this popular book on Jewish history, as seen "through the eyes of a 20th century Western man rather than a 16th century ghetto Talmudist," is eager to tell us in its first paragraph that Jews hold "12 per cent of all the Nobel prizes in physics, chemistry, and medicine."

BUT WHAT is one to make of this contemporary Western man who lumps together psychoanalysis, philosphy (what kind?), and existentialism as the sources of his interpretation of Jewish history. I can only deduce that he belongs to the Book-of-the-Month Club. I have nothing against that, but would also want him at least to have read more Jewish history. He would then have been saved from such minor errors as giving the Jewish population in France at the time of the Revolution as 70,000 instead of 40,000, and such major howlers as speaking of the Jews as exempt from Spengler's (really Vico's) law of the decay of civilizations, without once mentioning Nachman Krochmal, the great Jewish source of this idea.

In dealing with the *Shulchan Aruch*, Joseph Caro's codification of Jewish law in the 16th century, Dimont tells us that "it became a strait jacket constricting the universal ideas of the Jews." To be sure, he grants that it acted to preserve them as a group, but he denies to Jewish observance any merit as the bearer and the incarnation of a great faith. Elsewhere Dimont also assures us that Hasidism "affirms the Jewish spirit without the Jewish tradition . . . Hasidism and early Christianity were kindred spirits." Surely he ought to know better than that. The crucial difference between Hasidism and the Messianic movements of Shabbetai Zevi and Jacob Frank is precisely in their respective attitudes to the Jewish tradition. Hasidism affirmed the Law; that is why it remained within Judaism and why the true heirs of the Hasidic tradition continue today to produce their share, or more, of great Talmudists and deeply obedient traditionalists. Indeed, what makes Martin Buber a tendentious and misleading interpreter of the Hasidic tradition is that he has taken the step away from the Law that Mr. Dimont wrongly ascribes to the Baal-Shem Tov.

All this, and much more besides, is found along the path leading to Dimont's climactic paragraph which celebrates the emergence on American soil of the new Judaism:

> The rabbi is no longer an interpreter of Talmudic Judaism but a counselor and an interfaith mediator; prayer is no longer exclusively personal intercession with God but praise of the Creator; the synagogue or temple is no longer exclusively a place of worship but also a social community for expressing one's ties to Judaism. Just as the Pharisees discarded the third of the Torah and Talmud dealing with sacrifice and priesthood, so Reform Judaism is discarding another third of the Torah and Talmud dealing with dietary and ritual laws, leaving the last third, which it considers the core of Judaism—its code of ethics, morality, and justice. Will it be the historic role of American Jewry to usher in the Spinozian Age of Judaism—the universalist phase?

Even Mr. Dimont must know that in his universalist phase Spinoza left the Jewish community and the Jewish faith. Felix Adler, a century ago, took this same road and arrived at Ethical Culture, but he at least had the courage to make clear that he was breaking with the Jewish heritage. For Mr. Dimont to affirm that the present departure is the logical culmination of everything honorific in Jewish history is both vulgar and ignorant.

Dimont's book is not history. It is not even historic myth-making. Here are reflected the unordered yearnings of many "positive" Jews. This reviewer finds himself more disposed today, if Dimont's implicit picture of them is correct, to join their critics.

PROFESSORS AND PLOWMEN

ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM IN AMERICAN LIFE. By RICHARD HOFSTADTER. *Knopf. 432 pp. $6.95.*

Reviewed by
HENRY BAMFORD PARKES

WRITTEN with all the learning, wit, and sophistication that one has learnt to expect from Professor Hofstadter, this book brings together a mass of illuminating information about an aspect of American development which historians have not hitherto examined in any detail. Beginning and concluding with discussions of recent movements, such as McCarthyism and the growth of the lunatic fringe of the extreme right, Professor Hofstadter analyzes various aspects of anti-intellectualism since the colonial period, dealing more particularly with the growth of evangelical religion, the victory of the Jacksonian brand of democracy, the attitudes of businessmen, and the more fantastic pronouncements of progressive educators. As in his *Age of*

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Reform, which presented the agrarian revolt as in some ways a reactionary rather than a progressive movement, he resists the temptation to make easy moral judgments. One of Professor Hofstadter's especial merits as a historian is his awareness of complexities which make it impossible to label movements as simply good or bad, liberal or reactionary.

Anti-intellectualism is likely to show itself in any conflict in which the forces on one side are mostly "plain people" (to quote the Jacksonian phrase), while their opponents make claims to superior wisdom on the ground of being more highly educated. On the whole, therefore, anti-intellectualism has been associated mostly with democratic ideals, or at least with such ideals perversely interpreted. The exponents of evangelical religion promoted new forms of religious emotionalism and asserted that ordinary citizens could have direct communication with divine grace and did not need to follow the authority of college-trained theologians. Jacksonian democracy opposed traditional notions of the need for an educated ruling class and insisted that any man from any background was qualified for political office and that offices should rotate rapidly in order to enable as many people as possible to share in the tasks of government. Progressive education was largely motivated by the desire to find subjects that could be successfully studied by children of low intelligence, in order that such children should not be handicapped by a sense of intellectual inferiority. Only in the attitudes of businessmen and of contemporary right-wingers has anti-intellectualism become linked with forces that can fairly be labeled as reactionary. And these groups generally oppose progressive education and are not likely to approve of evangelical religion or of Jacksonian democracy. A distrust of brains and education has in the past been mostly associated with movements which progressive intellectuals have supported and approved of.

This seems like a paradoxical conclusion. It becomes less paradoxical if we remember that two different kinds of anti-intellectualism are involved. The anti-intellectualism associated with the growth of democracy was directed against the pretensions of educated aristocrats and professional men who—in the early days of the Republic—constituted a kind of American Establishment. That expressed by contemporary right-wingers, on the other hand, is directed against the free-lance intellectual who is interested in ideas for their own sake and has no particular institutional loyalties. And this kind of intellectual has generally—in America—been a supporter of democracy and has often given aid and comfort to democratic anti-intellectualism. One remembers Jefferson's famous statement that a plowman was a better moral guide than a professor because he trusted his own innate moral sense and was not led astray by artificial rules.

An intellectual anti-intellectualism has, in fact, been an important element in the American cultural tradition ever since the 18th century. That tradition was largely shaped by the Enlightenment, which taught American intellectuals to regard civilization with suspicion and to glorify the simple natural man. This trust in a natural virtue which civilization was likely to corrupt runs all through American intellectual history, being strongly marked in Transcendentalism, in Mark Twain and the whole convention of popular humor, and in much of the literature of the 20th century. Indeed, even the progressive educators who have carried the attack on intellectualism to its furthest possible limits must be regarded as part of the American tradition and as themselves intellectuals, even though debased ones. And perhaps one of our major cultural needs is a thoroughgoing re-examination of the unstated premises of American democratic thinking, with a shift of emphasis from quantity to quality and from the virtues of nature to those of sophistication.

Lest we grow unduly discouraged by the mass of evidence which Professor Hofstadter has assembled, we might remember that anti-intellectualism is by no means new or restricted to America. Ancient Athens, which probably had more respect for the mind than any other community in history, produced its first and classic expression. The *Clouds* of Aristophanes presented the standard case against the intellectual in portraying Socrates both as impractical and as subversive of accepted standards of morality.

KEEPING COOL

V. By Thomas Pynchon. *Lippincott. 492 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by Irving Feldman

V. is a first novel by an obviously talented young writer. It is an ambitious work and asks to be taken seriously, so it would be well to get to its claims to seriousness at once.

The subject of the novel is nothing less than the 20th century and its essential spirit, which is identified, every twenty pages or so, as the Inanimate. A female named V., or better, the v-ness of V.—Pynchon's symbol of the Inanimate—is the subject of a search made by a sort of blank named Herbert Stencil whose only identity is that of "He Who Looks for V." V. herself first appears at the beginning of the *belle epoque* as a young girl named Victoria Wren who is innocently mixing politics and sex in Cairo. A year or so later she appears in Florence as a free-lancing operative, happening into the midst of three comically political plots and a riot. Next, she turns up in the Paris of 1913 as a lesbian; then, as Veronica Manganese, in Malta in 1919; again, in South Africa in 1922, as Vera Meroving, where she seems to have some connection with Hitler; last, in Malta again during World War II, where dressed as a priest, she advises girls to enter the nunnery and boys to become like crystal. Here she dies in an air raid, wearing high-heeled sandals inside her shoes, a false leg, a sapphire in her navel, a glass eye which is also a watch, a wig, a Crucifixion tattooed on her

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bald head, and an elaborate set of false teeth. Throughout this history, she has become progressively more reified, political, deracinated, defeminized, "anti-life," fetishistic, abstract, nameless, has become, in short, V.—while the politics in which she is involved, beginning with the comic Egyptian and Florentine intrigues, encompassing the supposed leisure and preposterousness of pre-World War I Europe, and ending with the Second World War, become more pitiless and deadly. And V. itself, the ultimate V., is the final abstraction, the hieroglyph *v*—here standing for a meeting place of two extremes: a confluence of "the street" of Leftist riots, of the alienated tourist, of the honky-tonk, of stone and the "hothouse" of the Rightist and conservative dream. It is also supposed to represent, I guess, the female delta made abstract by random lust, its fruit aborted. So it is that V. returns to Malta, the mother-island it is called here, to counsel abortion and abstinence. Men make inanimate; women are their victims.

But these avatars of V. make up only one-third of the novel. The rest is given over to the partyings, couplings, and "yo-yo-ings," of a group of zanies with odd names and odd behavior among whom Herbert Stencil circulates in search of clues to V. These are the denizens of the Street, mostly New York in the 1950's, who live out the Inanimate—rootless, frightened, desperate, weary, wantless, or cynical, they carom around at random in the great gaudy pinball machine of the times, ringing up bizarre lights and grotesque scores, colliding and drifting away to turn up again, predictably, in the oddest holes. The cast includes Benny Profane (in flight from commitment and frightened of the Street, whose most perfect citizen he is, "a schlemihl and human yo-yo" who ruins women by not loving them); Rachel Owlglass (she makes love to her MG but turns out to be a regular guy and good woman); Pig Bodine (a pig who quotes Sartre, an AWOL sailor); various other sailors of the freak-show variety; Esther Harvitz (enamored of the plastic surgeon who's Irished her nose); the "Whole Sick Crew"—failed artists and hangers-on around the arts: Raoul, Slab, Winsome, Fu, Charisma, Fergus Mixolydian, etc.; Mafia (lady novelist, wearer of falsies, racial and sexual ideologue); McClintic Sphere (jazz musician, who becomes wise); some shadowy characters named Dudley Eigenvalue (a "psychodontist") and Bloody Chiclitz, the munitions king. I need only add that the plastic surgeon is assisted by a scalpel-throwing man named Trench and a woman named Irving for the reader to get the full flavor of the comedy.

PYNCHON'S humor is of the strenuous contemporary sort, for this novel goes to extraordinary lengths to be funny, extreme, alive to the soullessness of the times. But Pynchon is not a lighthanded nudger of pinball machines, and the scoreboard mostly comes up Tilt. To put it plainly, much of *V.* is unreadable. Pynchon's humor gives me the impression of a generation of the brighter college wits locked up with their favorite comedians in the think-tank of an endless living room party where they are all engaged in brainstorming into existence the great American satire, the skit to end all skits. Such deliberate humor may do passably well where it meets, as it does on social occasions, an audience deliberately enjoying itself, but in the privacy of the printed page (and without the ministrations, oglings, and tongue-suckings of a professional comedian), it is impossible—perhaps a very young reader of *V.* might imagine an audience of the like-thinking and right-thinking enjoying themselves along with him over this sort of thing:

> Mrs. Buffo [the owner of a sailor's bar], poised on her rampart like the trumpeter of Cracow, took the full impact of the onslaught, toppling over backwards into an ice-tub as the first wave [of sailors] came hurtling over the bar. Ploy, hands outstretched, was propelled over the top. He caught on to one of the tap handles and simultaneously his shipmates let go; his momentum carried him and the handle in a downward arc: beer began to gush from the foam rubber breast in a white cascade, washing over Ploy, Mrs. Buffo and two dozen sailors who had come around the bar in a flanking action and who were now battering one another into insensibility.

The trouble, however, goes deeper than this broad, youthful, self-conscious humor with its fatiguing brightness, its bad jokes, and toneless prose. It resides in the fact that Pynchon is an extremely facile writer of caricature. If Virginia Woolf, Gide, Borges, Proust, and Lawrence Durrell, for example, turn up in *V.*, they do so not as "influences" but as taking-off points. It is very much as if Pynchon's talent can only work given the springboard of pastiche, as if he can deal with his characters only on the condition that they are isolated and qualified by some literary or psychological tongue-in-cheek. Thus he has great difficulty in stabilizing his characters and in getting them to talk to one another, for they are constantly being defaced by the universal solvent of Pynchon's archness, which functions like some hidden second thought of the writer, something he knows that his characters don't know: that he is the only deviser and player of the pinball game through which they spin. Naturally, the characters will have their revenge, and enter into a subtle conspiracy with the reader against him, for both want a serious existence for the characters. As in some anti-novel or anti-play, Pynchon's characters seem always on the verge of demanding their author to grant them their freedom. But given their screwball beginnings in the novel and the air, breathless and hypomanic, of pastiche continuously surrounding them, nothing could be more meaningless than the problem of Rachel finding fruitful love, Esther having an abortion, Benny Profane reaching the end of the Street. Maybe Pynchon himself is secretly on the characters' side, since he frequently introduces a sane and sympathetic note into his weird scenes. As it stands, however, the characters do not struggle with one another but against their premises. The real source of the Inanimate in *V.* is the author.

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The Inanimate again! The springboard of caricature leads to the pratfall of theme, the false empyrean of the former implies the false profundity of the latter. As I have noted, the theme of the Inanimate is explained and commented on throughout the novel—necessarily, for it constitutes the ground of seriousness that the characters themselves lack; when the whirling balls finally come to rest, they tumble into the great fosse of the theme, the sea level into which all of the novel drains. The characters turn out to be mere instances of the Inanimate, all the dizzy details of their careers reduced to the prosaicism of the author's intention. And this means, I think, that Pynchon hasn't conceived of his theme greatly enough. He may show the Inanimate to be omnipresent, but he hasn't made it important, for his characters are themselves worthless.

One last thought. McClintic Sphere, the jazz musician, gets wisdom, which is summarized in his motto, "Keep cool, but care." This is an old wisdom. The version of T. S. Eliot (who was also afflicted with pastiche) is, "Teach us to care and not to care." (I think the order of caring and not caring given in the Eliot line is the right one; Sphere's higgledy-piggledy cutely "authentic" prose holds no charm for me.) Maybe the wisdom of the next line in *Ash Wednesday* might be apt for Pynchon's practice as a novelist: "Teach us to sit still."

THE EDUCATIONISTS

THE MISEDUCATION OF AMERICAN TEACHERS. By JAMES D. KOERNER. *Houghton Mifflin. 360 pp. $4.95.*

Reviewed by EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG

DR. KOERNER'S book is the latest, and quite possibly the best, in a long series of attacks on us educationists and our imputed control of the apparatus of American public education that began with—to make a somewhat arbitrary choice—Canon Bernard Iddings Bell's *Crisis in Education* in 1949. A more direct ancestor of *The Miseducation of American Teachers* is Arthur Bestor's *Educational Wastelands*; for Bestor is a founder and principal intellectual source of the Council for Basic Education, of whose board of directors Dr. Koerner is currently president. Dr. Koerner develops Bestor's position further, and, as the title of the work implies, focuses it on the quality of teacher preparation provided by education courses at both graduate and undergraduate levels.

Dr. Koerner finds that quality extremely low, and considers that required training in professional education—as distinct from general education or the courses in the teacher's particular field—probably does more harm than good. The education courses drive out more useful material by sheer bulk and are intolerably repetitious, banal, and trivial. They also actively miseducate through the vulgarity of their basic assumptions and language; and they keep able students who are unwilling to risk grievous and protracted intellectual insult from even trying to become teachers. Worst of all, educationists establish a flaccid, sentimental, and fundamentally anti-intellectual ideology as orthodox and rebuke any effort to clarify objectives or improve their intellectual quality.

Educationists, moreover, constitute in Koerner's view an Establishment —though what he describes sounds more like a conspiracy. State licensing authorities collaborate with education faculties to maintain their vested interests by requiring their useless offerings for certification; a huge lobby, the NEA, and a paramilitary arm, NCATE (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education) protect this hegemony and punish deviations from the ideology. We, the educationists, utilize this support to demand even more credit hours in education than the unjust law provides. We are not deterred or embarrassed by having no subject matter of our own to offer; Dr. Koerner sees us as magpies, thieving from the nests of psychology and history—he does not seem to be aware of sociology as a discipline, referring only, and pejoratively, to "social sciences" —or as cowbirds, laying our own eggs in those nests.

But birds we are, of a feather; and the birds are what education courses are strictly for. "This book," Dr. Koerner writes as the first sentence of his fourth paragraph, "dealing with one of the most controversial and most protean areas in education, pretends to no scientific detachment, either in conception or execution." This statement is the first of many incontestable truths in the book.

Neither Dr. Koerner's complaint nor his viewpoint is particularly novel; but this, I think, tends to justify the book rather than detract from it. It is ten years since Bestor's *Educational Wastelands* was published, and if the abuses he discussed had been adequately corrected, Dr. Koerner's book could not have been written. In fact there has been little effort to respond, and Dr. Koerner is justified in reopening the issue. The whole matter is of the greatest importance in American education, both because the public schools are the foundation of subsequent academic and intellectual development and, in their present state, perhaps the major limitation upon it; and because, as Dr. Koerner points out, schools and departments of education are in themselves the largest single component of the American academic enterprise:

> Professional Education constitutes a considerable industry. It is the largest single field in higher education. It awarded 143,000 bachelor's degrees in 1962, about a third of all those awarded by U.S. institutions. It produces more doctorates by far, 1,500–2,000 a year, than any single field.

Serious weakness in so large a part of the body is obviously cause for alarm. Yet weakness is generally one consequence of hypertrophy; and Dr. Koerner sees the growth of professional education as cancerous in its disorder as well as in its magnitude. Coming to the heart of the matter, Dr. Koerner writes as follows:

> It is an indecorous thing to say and obviously offensive to most educationists, but it is the truth and it should be said: the inferior in-

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tellectual quality of the Education faculty is *the* fundamental limitation of the field, and will remain so, in my judgment, for some time to come. Although a number of able men are to be found, as I have said, in Education particularly among the younger people, their number is minute in relation to the whole. Moreover, there is still a strong strain of anti-intellectualism that runs through the typical Education staff, despite their increasingly frequent apostrophes to academic quality.

Dr. Koerner's procedures are careful and scholarly; he is meticulous in describing them and in citing sources on which he has depended. Most of the abuses he complains of, moreover, do exist and are serious as any intellectually honest "educationist" must grant. Yet, for these very reasons, I find it hard to explain why Dr. Koerner has not written a better and more penetrating work.

My own response to it seems to me odd. There is first the shock of agreement. There is the more cautious and reluctant recognition that the critic has got his facts right, but also the sneaky awareness that, since he is an outsider, he still doesn't know that things are even worse than he says they are, and a thoroughly selfish hope that he never finds out. But withal, there is an underlying sense that he hasn't got it right; that his whole frame of reference makes it impossible for him really to understand what is happening or basically why. Koerner on educationists seems as wide of the mark as Sartre or Brecht on the Deep South—not very wide, really; only just enough to miss.

Part of the reason is that he is blinded by his own contempt for us and all our works. He samples textbooks widely used in education courses, and justly deplores their triviality and bias; but he does not refer to the texts that cite original research of high quality in a format that encourages analytical and original attacks on educational issues. There are a number of those in my own field (educational sociology),

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of which the most recent, W. W. Charters, Jr. and N. L. Gage's *Readings in the Social Psychology of Education* is a model. This is a book of readings, most of which are complete reports or summaries of significant research of high quality organized around topics like social class and family influences, school desegregation, student relationships in the classroom, teacher-student interaction, student motivation and teacher control, the American teacher, and adults in the school and community. This is by no means innocuous material; in fact, the research reported here, taken all-in-all, provides a basis for more fundamental and precise criticism of American public education than any Dr. Koerner offers. But such a book simply cannot be accounted for in his scheme, which maintains that the research we do is trivial and that we have no subject matter of our own.

Some of the contributors to Charters and Gage are "educationists"; many are sociologists and psychologists and could therefore be cited as evidence for Koerner's position. But Koerner himself recognizes that nobody maintains that the mind functions differently in school than elsewhere, or that the school as a social institution is a law unto itself. Educational psychology and educational sociology courses, or courses in the history or philosophy of education, are not offered separately because they involve a special psychology, sociology, history, or philosophy; when they are said to, as Koerner correctly notes, they become meretricious. But with so large a proportion of students taking these courses as a part of their preparation as teachers, it seems sensible and economical to organize them around and with special reference to the school and its activities. Whether they are offered by sociologists, psychologists, or educationists seems to me unimportant, so long as the instructor is qualified. Dr. Koerner, however, would bar persons whose graduate work has been in professional education, and who have no recognized qualification in an academic discipline, from teaching courses, such as the above, "that are derived directly from the academic disciplines." Some of Dr. Koerner's most sensible strictures are directed against the rigidity of current accreditation practices; and how higher education could be improved by extending them further I cannot see. The issue clearly hangs on what is meant by "recognized qualification"; he is certainly correct in observing that many educationists accept responsibility for academic assignments beyond their intellectual means. But this must be dealt with by more discriminating faculty policy, not by further bureaucratization.

DR. KOERNER does not trust educationists enough even to permit them the normal administrative functions associated with their jobs. "School systems," he warns, "generally delegate to administrators the basic responsibility for hiring teachers and in doing so often abdicate their responsibility for defining the qualifications they want their teachers to have." Elsewhere, he complains that the doctoral dissertations of these administrators may have dealt with custodial functions and their graduate work probably included courses in school-bus scheduling. He is right to object to this kind of training, but if administrators had as little responsibility as he would leave them, it might be their best preparation.

Yet the important thing about *The Miseducation of American Teachers*, surely, is that what Dr. Koerner complains of is so largely true. The book, being innocent of social analysis, does not tell us why it should be so. But it provides a number of clues to readers more interested in understanding and less anxious to condemn. One of Dr. Koerner's most cogent passages asserts:

> Although there are no precise criteria defining when a field is or is not a profession, the condition of the teaching field does not even measure up to such gross standards of professionalism as these: exercising significant control over the caliber of people entering the training programs, establishing standards for admission to professional associations, policing its own ranks and guarding against abuses, administering qualifying examinations to graduates of approved programs before admission to the field or creating some other means for insuring minimum competency on the part of its members. . . . Whatever else teaching is, it is not yet a profession. . . .

No, it isn't; and knowing that it isn't, Dr. Koerner ought to have done more than he does to draw inferences from some of the most interesting and revealing data in his book. These are the comparisons, presented in Tables IV and V, of the "academic profiles" of graduates of teacher training programs in liberal arts colleges, universities, and teachers' colleges (or former teachers' colleges). Quite uniformly, on all the criteria that Dr. Koerner finds significant, the liberal arts colleges offer better programs than the universities, and the universities better ones than the teachers' colleges. Better for Dr. Koerner means more liberal—more semester hours offered to liberal studies and fewer to education courses.

I, TOO, believe that this would be better. But these data, in view of Dr. Koerner's recognition that teachers are not a profession, ought to be enough to reveal to him that what he is dealing with is not just the ideology of a special interest group. What he is confronting is a massive set of social class characteristics. For the most part, the schools, along with their prevailing values, the language and customs of their personnel, represent lower-middle class life in America; there is a wide range, but this is the norm. Educationists, too, as Dr. Koerner justly observes, are more likely to represent this way of life than are members of the more liberal faculties; and this is especially true in the liberal arts colleges. In a school primarily devoted to teacher education even the liberal faculties tend to be of this stamp.

But it is absurd to blame school administrators because the schools are shabby-genteel and vulgar, or for being so themselves. The history of

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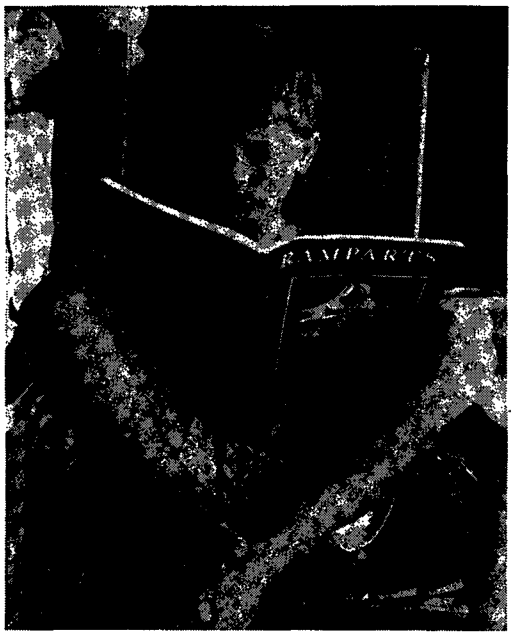
the schools and their present social function require it. The schools must continually support the absurd insistence of an open society that institutionalized instruction can turn anybody into anything regardless of his earlier (pardon the expression) life-experience. The entire staff of the Riverside Chapels, granted *carte blanche,* could not have produced in Pal Joey the semblance of the Dartmouth graduate he pretended to be —and neither, unfortunately, could Dartmouth. But it comforts us to treat as casual the one status characteristic that can be most widely, though crudely, counterfeited—education; and to expect it to make up for all the subtle and informal learning that has already been missed, or that may have made academic experience incongruous.

Public education proceeds on the assumption that plastic ivy is just as good as real. In some ways it is better. It can be mass-produced and installed anywhere; and it can be made so strong that any number of people can climb on it without destroying it; if it gets dirty it can be sterilized. We "educationists" are part of the plastic ivy system; and our presence in the Halls of Ivy must be tolerated in order to legitimate the public school system. If we are rejected as an unconvincing fake, the common people of America will be forced to face the fact that the kind of education they can fit into the lives available to them under our social and economic arrangements really is not going to get them anywhere much. This might be a factor tending toward social instability.

Dr. Koerner, of course, maintains that we are the not-very-efficient cause of this futility; and suggests that we be replaced with real ivy. But real ivy does not flourish in the anti-intellectual climate of American public life, and it does not easily take root in the pragmatic dirt that covers the foundations of American public institutions. Nor is it very well adapted to the task immediately at hand. The critical problem of public education at the present time does not arise from any academic failure, but from its inability to accept, dis-



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cipline, and imaginatively conceive the lives and potentialities of lower-status students to whom the traditional form and content of liberal education are as foreign as Japanese. It is still possible—I should say probable—that a liberal education would contribute more than the professional curriculum of education to the solution of this intensely human problem, which must be attacked in humanistic terms rather than as an exercise in group dynamics. But Dr. Koerner's own reliance on comparisons between the numbers of semester hours of preparation in "academic education" versus "professional education" suggests too limited a conception of liberal education to support its use as a truly liberalizing force that could be brought to bear on the existential plight of all students, academic and non-academic alike. This, I believe, is the only use of academic preparation that is fundamentally relevant to the public school teacher's job, today.

The difficulties of public education, then, are too deeply rooted in their social context to be attacked as the consequences of Establishment policy. If we were turned out of what Dr. Koerner regards as the seats of power tomorrow, our successors, be they all specialists in Chaucer or the history of the Renaissance, would still be obliged to do much as we have done. What would be of more help than trying to loosen the hold of "educationists" and deploring bitterly the difficulty of doing so, would be to strengthen alternatives to it. Along these lines, recent proposals to allow students to designate the school of their choice, whether it be public, private, or parochial, as the recipient of the funds the state would in any case provide for their education, seem to me the most direct and promising way of helping students to escape our thralldom; and of forcing "educationists" to deal respectfully and realistically with the actual capacities and tastes of their students. In particular, it would end our hegemony over the poor, who would thus be provided with the equivalent of a scholarship and could apply it to an education less devoted to cleaning them up and teaching them to mind their dress and their language and more to developing their tremendous wasted human and intellectual potential. It is paradoxical that a nation so terrified of creeping socialism that it cannot even care for its sick and aged, and that would rather subsidize individual farmers to produce a perpetual glut than control agriculture by public policy, should be so chary of providing any public support for education independent of the Establishment that Dr. Koerner so sharply criticizes.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

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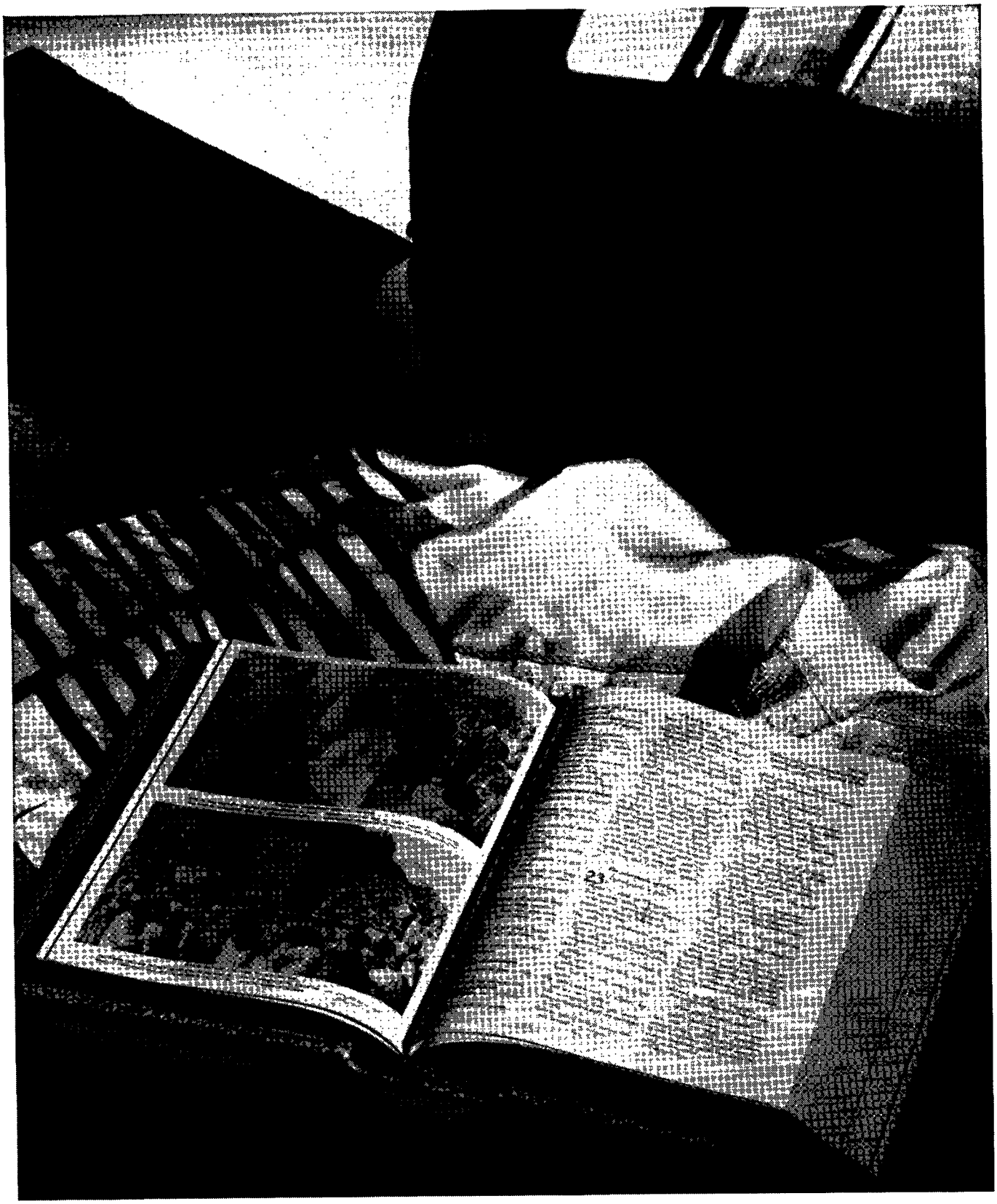

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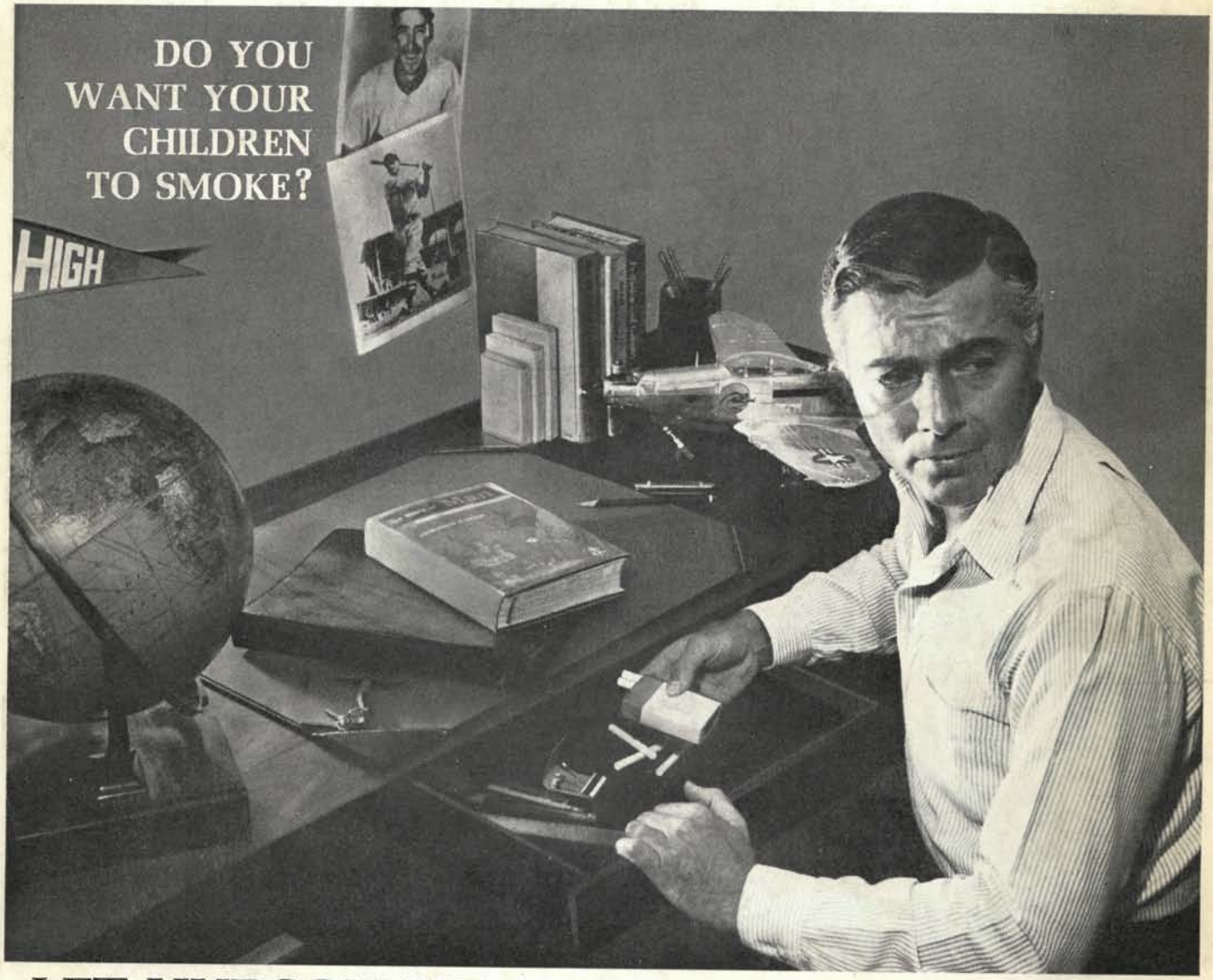

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